

THE
MYSTERIES OF UDOLPHO,
A
ROMANCE;

INTERSPERSED WITH SOME PIECES OF POETRY.

BY
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THE THIRD EDITION.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

Fate sits on these dark battlements, and frowns,
And, as the portals open to receive me,
Her voice, in fullen echoes through the courts,
Tells of a nameless deed.

VOL. IV.

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THE
MYSTERIES
OF
UDOLPHO.

CHAP. I.

“ Is all the council that we two have shared,
..... the hours that we have spent,
When we have chid the hasty-footed time
For parting us——Oh! and is all forgot?
.....
And will you rent our ancient love asunder?”

MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM.

IN the evening, when Emily was at length informed, that Count de Villefort requested to see her, she guessed that Valancourt was below, and, endeavouring to assume composure and to recollect all her spirits, she rose and left the apartment; but on reaching the door of the library, where she ima-

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gined him to be, her emotion returned with such energy, that, fearing to trust herself in the room, she returned into the hall, where she continued for a considerable time, unable to command her agitated spirits.

When she could recall them, she found in the library Valancourt, seated with the Count, who both rose on her entrance; but she did not dare to look at Valancourt, and the Count, having led her to a chair, immediately withdrew.

Emily remained with her eyes fixed on the floor, under such oppression of heart, that she could not speak, and with difficulty breathed; while Valancourt threw himself into a chair beside her, and, sighing heavily, continued silent, when, had she raised her eyes, she would have perceived the violent emotion he suffered.

At length, in a tremulous voice, he said, "I have solicited to see you this evening, that I might, at least, be spared the further torture of suspense, which your altered manner had occasioned me, and which the
hints

hints I have just received from the Count have in part explained. I perceive I have enemies, Emily, who envied me my late happiness, and who have been busy in searching out the means to destroy it : I perceive, too, that time and absence have weakened the affection you once felt for me, and that you can now easily be taught to forget me."

His last words faltered, and Emily, less able to speak than before, continued silent.

"O what a meeting is this!" exclaimed Valancourt, starting from his seat, and pacing the room with hurried steps, "what a meeting is this, after our long—long separation!" Again he sat down, and, after the struggle of a moment, he added in a firm but despairing tone, "This is too much—I cannot bear it! Emily, will you not speak to me?"

He covered his face with his hand, as if to conceal his emotion, and took Emily's, which she did not withdraw. Her tears could no longer be restrained; and, when

he looked up and perceived that she was weeping, all his tenderness returned, and a gleam of hope appeared to cross his mind, for he exclaimed, "O! you do pity me, then, you do love me! Yes, you are still my own Emily——let me believe those tears, that tell me so!"

Emily now made an effort to recover her firmness, and, hastily drying them, "Yes," said she, "I do pity you—I weep for you—but, ought I to think of you with affection? You may remember that yester-evening, I said, I had still sufficient confidence in your candour to believe, that, when I should request an explanation of your words, you would give it. This explanation is now unnecessary, I understand them too well; but prove, at least, that your candour is deserving of the confidence I give it, when I ask you, whether you are conscious of being the same estimable Valancourt—whom I once loved."

"Once loved!" cried he,—“the same—the same!” He paused in extreme emotion,
and

and then added, in a voice at once solemn, and dejected,—“ No—I am not the same ! —I am lost—I am no longer worthy of you ! ”

He again concealed his face. Emily was too much affected by this honest confession to reply immediately, and, while she struggled to overcome the pleadings of her heart, and to act with the decisive firmness, which was necessary for her future peace, she perceived all the danger of trusting long to her resolution, in the presence of Valancourt, and was anxious to conclude an interview, that tortured them both ; yet when she considered, that this was probably their last meeting, her fortitude sunk at once, and she experienced only emotions of tenderness and of despondency.

Valancourt, meanwhile, lost in those of remorse and grief, which he had neither the power, or the will to express, sat insensible almost of the presence of Emily, his features still concealed, and his breast agitated by convulsive sighs.

“ Spare me the necessity,” said Emily, recollecting her fortitude, “ spare me the necessity of mentioning those circumstances of your conduct, which oblige me to break our connection for ever. We must part, I now see you for the last time.”

“ Impossible!” cried Valancourt, roused from his deep silence, “ You cannot mean what you say!—you cannot mean to throw me from you for ever!”

“ We must part,” repeated Emily, with emphasis,—“ and that for ever! Your own conduct has made this necessary.”

“ This is the Count’s determination,” said he haughtily, “ not yours, and I shall enquire by what authority he interferes between us.” He now rose, and walked about the room in great emotion.

“ Let me save you from this error,” said Emily, not less agitated—“ it is my determination, and, if you reflect a moment on your late conduct, you will perceive, that my future peace requires it.”

“ Your future peace requires, that we
should

should part—part for ever!” said Valancourt: “ How little did I ever expect to hear you say so !”

“ And how little did I expect, that it would be necessary for me to say so !” rejoined Emily, while her voice softened into tenderness, and her tears flowed again.—“ That you—you, Valancourt, would ever fall from my esteem !”

He was silent a moment, as if overwhelmed by the consciousness of no longer deserving this esteem, as well as the certainty of having lost it, and then, with impassioned grief, lamented the criminality of his late conduct and the misery to which it had reduced him, till, overcome by a recollection of the past and a conviction of the future, he burst into tears, and uttered only deep and broken sighs.

The remorse he had expressed, and the distress he suffered could not be witnessed by Emily with indifference, and, had she not called to her recollection all the circumstances, of which Count de Villefort had

informed her, and all he had said of the danger of confiding in repentance, formed under the influence of passion, she might perhaps have trusted to the assurances of her heart, and have forgotten his misconduct in the tenderness, which that repentance excited.

Valancourt, returning to the chair beside her, at length, said, in a subdued voice, " 'Tis true, I am fallen—fallen from my own esteem! but could you, Emily, so soon, so suddenly resign, if you had not before ceased to love me, or, if your conduct was not governed by the designs, I will say, the selfish designs of another person? Would you not otherwise be willing to hope for my reformation—and could you bear, by estranging me from you, to abandon me to misery—to myself!"—Emily wept aloud.—" No, Emily—no—you would not do this, if you still loved me. You would find your own happiness in saving mine."

" There are too many probabilities against that hope," said Emily, " to justify
me

me in trusting the comfort of my whole life to it. May I not also ask, whether you could wish me to do this, if you really loved me?"

" Really loved you !" exclaimed Valancourt—" is it possible you can doubt my love ? Yet it is reasonable, that you should do so, since you see, that I am less ready to suffer the horror of parting with you, than that of involving you in my ruin. Yes, Emily—I am ruined.—irreparably ruined—I am involved in debts, which I can never discharge !" Valancourt's look, which was wild, as he spoke this, soon settled into an expression of gloomy despair ; and Emily, while she was compelled to admire his sincerity, saw, with unutterable anguish, new reasons for fear in the suddenness of his feelings and the extent of the misery, in which they might involve him. After some minutes, she seemed to contend against her grief, and to struggle for fortitude to conclude the interview. I will not prolong these moments," said she, " by a conversation,

which can answer no good purpose. Valancourt, farewell !”

“ You are not going ?” said he wildly, interrupting her—“ You will not leave me thus—you will not abandon me even before my mind has suggested any possibility of compromise between the last indulgence of my despair and the endurance of my loss !” Emily was terrified by the sternness of his look, and said, in a soothing voice, “ You have yourself acknowledged, that it is necessary we should part ;—if you wish, that I should believe you love me, you will repeat the acknowledgment.”—“ Never—never,” cried he—“ I was distracted when I made it. O ! Emily—this is too much ;—though you are not deceived as to my faults, you must be deluded into this exasperation against them. The Count is the barrier between us ; but he shall not long remain so.”

“ You are, indeed, distracted,” said Emily, “ the Count is not your enemy ; on the contrary, he is my friend, and that
might,

might, in some degree, induce you to consider him as yours."—"Your friend!" said Valancourt, hastily, "how long has he been your friend, that he can so easily make you forget your lover? Was it he, who recommended to your favour the Monsieur Du Pont, who, you say, accompanied you from Italy, and who, I say, has stolen your affections? But I have no right to question you;—you are your own mistress. Du Pont, perhaps, may not long triumph over my fallen fortunes! Emily, more frightened than before by the frantic looks of Valancourt, said, in a tone scarcely audible, "For heaven's sake be reasonable—be composed. Monsieur Du Pont is not your rival, nor is the Count his advocate. You have no rival; nor, except yourself, an enemy. My heart is wrung with anguish, which must increase while your frantic behaviour shews me, more than ever, that you are no longer the Valancourt I have been accustomed to love."

He made no reply, but sat with his arms

rested on the table and his face concealed by his hands; while Emily stood, silent and trembling, wretched for herself and dreading to leave him in this state of mind.

“ O excess of misery !” he suddenly exclaimed, “ that I can never lament my sufferings, without accusing myself, nor remember you, without recollecting the folly and the vice, by which I have lost you ! Why was I forced to Paris, and why did I yield to allurements, which were to make me despicable for ever ! O ! why cannot I look back, without interruption, to those days of innocence and peace, the days of our early love !”—The recollection seemed to melt his heart, and the phrensy of despair yielded to tears. After a long pause, turning towards her and taking her hand, he said, in a softened voice, “ Emily, can you bear that we should part—can you resolve to give up an heart, that loves you like mine—an heart, which, though it has erred—widely erred—is not irretrievable from error, as you well know, it never can be

be retrievable from love?" Emily made no reply, but with her tears. "Can you," continued he, "can you forget all our former days of happiness and confidence—when I had not a thought, that I might wish to conceal from you—when I had no taste—no pleasures, in which you did not participate?"

"O do not lead me to the remembrance of those days," said Emily, "unless you can teach me to be insensible to the present. I do not mean to reproach you; if I did, I should be spared these tears; but why will you render your present sufferings more conspicuous, by contrasting them with your former virtues?"

"Those virtues," said Valancourt, "might, perhaps, again be mine, if your affection, which nurtured them, was unchanged;—but I fear, indeed, I see, that you can no longer love me; else the happy hours, which we have passed together, would plead for me, and you could not look back upon them unmoved. Yet, why should I
torture

torture myself with the remembrance—why do I linger here? Am I not ruined—would it not be madness to involve you in my misfortunes, even if your heart was still my own? I will not distress you further. Yet, before I go,” added he, in a solemn voice, “let me repeat, that, whatever may be my destiny—whatever I may be doomed to suffer, I must always love you—most fondly love you! I am going, Emily, I am going to leave you—to leave you, for ever!” As he spoke the last words, his voice trembled, and he threw himself again into the chair, from which he had risen. Emily was utterly unable to leave the room, or to say farewell. All impression of his criminal conduct and almost of his follies was obliterated from her mind, and she was sensible only of pity and grief.

“My fortitude is gone,” said Valancourt at length; “I can no longer even struggle to recall it. I cannot now leave you—I cannot bid you an eternal farewell; say, at least, that you will see me once again.”

Emily's heart was somewhat relieved by the request, and she endeavoured to believe, that she ought not to refuse it. Yet she was embarrassed by recollecting, that she was a visitor in the house of the Count, who could not be pleased by the return of Valancourt. Other considerations, however, soon overcame this, and she granted his request, on the condition, that he would neither think of the Count, as his enemy, nor Du Pont as his rival. He then left her, with a heart, so much lightened by this short respite, that he almost lost every former sense of misfortune.

Emily withdrew to her own room, that she might compose her spirits and remove the traces of her tears, which would encourage the censorious remarks of the Countess and her favourite, as well as excite the curiosity of the rest of the family. She found it, however, impossible to tranquillize her mind, from which she could not expel the remembrance of the late scene with Valancourt, or
the

the consciousness, that she was to see him again, on the morrow. This meeting now appeared more terrible to her than the last, for the ingenuous confession he had made of his ill conduct and his embarrassed circumstances, with the strength and tenderness of affection, which this confession discovered, had deeply impressed her, and, in spite of all she had heard and believed to his disadvantage, her esteem began to return. It frequently appeared to her impossible, that he could have been guilty of the depravities reported of him, which, if not inconsistent with his warmth and impetuosity, were entirely so with his candour and sensibility. Whatever was the criminality, which had given rise to the reports, she could not now believe them to be wholly true, nor that his heart was finally closed against the charms of virtue. The deep consciousness, which he felt as well as expressed of his errors, seemed to justify the opinion; and, as she understood not the instability of youthful dispositions,

positions, when opposed by habit, and that professions frequently deceive those, who make, as well as those, who hear them, she might have yielded to the flattering persuasions of her own heart and the pleadings of Valancourt, had she not been guided by the superior prudence of the Count. He represented to her, in a clear light, the danger of her present situation, that of listening to promises of amendment, made under the influence of strong passion, and the slight hope, which could attach to a connection, whose chance of happiness rested upon the retrieval of ruined circumstances and the reform of corrupted habits. On these accounts, he lamented, that Emily had consented to a second interview, for he saw how much it would shake her resolution and increase the difficulty of her conquest.

Her mind was now so entirely occupied by nearer interests, that she forgot the old housekeeper and the promised history, which so lately had excited her curiosity, but which

Dorothée

Dorothee was probably not very anxious to disclose, for night came; the hours passed; and she did not appear in Emily's chamber. With the latter it was a sleepless and dismal night; the more she suffered her memory to dwell on the late scene with Valancourt, the more her resolution declined, and she was obliged to recollect all the arguments, which the Count had made use of to strengthen it, and all the precepts, which she had received from her deceased father, on the subject of self-command, to enable her to act, with prudence and dignity, on this the most severe occasion of her life. There were moments, when all her fortitude forsook her, and when, remembering the confidence of former times, she thought it impossible, that she could renounce Valancourt. His reformation then appeared certain; the arguments of Count De Villefort were forgotten; she readily believed all she wished, and was willing to encounter any evil, rather than that of an immediate separation.

Thus

Thus passed the night in ineffectual struggles between affection and reason, and she rose, in the morning, with a mind, weakened and irresolute, and a frame, trembling with illness.

C H A P. II.

"Come, weep with me;—past hope, past cure, past help!"

ROMEO AND JULIET.

VALANCOURT, meanwhile, suffered the tortures of remorse and despair. The sight of Emily had renewed all the ardour, with which he first loved her, and which had suffered a temporary abatement from absence and the passing scenes of busy life. When, on the receipt of her letter, he set out for Languedoc, he then knew, that his own folly had involved him in ruin, and it was no part of his design to conceal this from her. But he lamented only the delay which his ill-conduct must give to their marriage, and did not foresee, that the information could induce her to break their connection for ever. While the prospect of this separation overwhelmed his mind, before stung with self-reproach, he awaited their second interview,

view, in a state little short of distraction; yet was still inclined to hope, that his pleadings might prevail upon her not to exact it. In the morning, he sent to know at what hour she would see him; and his note arrived, when she was with the Count, who had sought an opportunity of again conversing with her of Valancourt; for he perceived the extreme distress of her mind, and feared, more than ever, that her fortitude would desert her. Emily having dismissed the messenger, the Count returned to the subject of their late conversation, urging his fear of Valancourt's entreaties, and again pointing out to her the lengthened misery, that must ensue, if she should refuse to encounter some present uneasiness. His repeated arguments could, indeed, alone have protected her from the affection she still felt for Valancourt, and she resolved to be governed by them.

The hour of interview, at length, arrived. Emily went to it, at least, with composure of manner; but Valancourt was so much agitated,

agitated, that he could not speak, for several minutes, and his first words were alternately those of lamentation, entreaty and self-reproach. Afterward, he said, “ Emily, I have loved you—I do love you better than my life; but I am ruined by my own conduct. Yet I would seek to entangle you in a connection, that must be miserable for you, rather than subject myself to the punishment, which is my due, the loss of you. I am a wretch, but I will be a villain no longer.—I will not endeavour to shake your resolution by the pleadings of a selfish passion. I resign you, Emily, and will endeavour to find consolation in considering, that, though I am miserable, you, at least, may be happy. The merit of the sacrifice, is, indeed, not my own, for I should never have attained strength of mind to surrender you, if your prudence had not demanded it.”

He paused a moment, while Emily attempted to conceal the tears, which came to her eyes. She would have said, “ You speak now, as you were wont to do,” but she

she checked herself.—“ Forgive me, Emily,” said he, “ all the sufferings I have occasioned you, and, sometimes, when you think of the wretched Valancourt, remember, that his only consolation would be to believe, that you are no longer unhappy by his folly.” The tears now fell fast upon her cheek, and he was relapsing into the phrensy of despair, when Emily endeavoured to recall her fortitude and to terminate an interview, which only seemed to increase the distress of both. Perceiving her tears and that she was rising to go, Valancourt struggled, once more, to overcome his own feelings and to sooth hers. “ The remembrance of this sorrow,” said he, “ shall in future be my protection. O ! never again will example, or temptation have power to seduce me to evil, exalted as I shall be by the recollection of your grief for me.”

Emily was somewhat comforted by this assurance. “ We are now parting for ever,” said she ; “ but, if my happiness is dear to you, you will always remember, that nothing

thing can contribute to it more, than to believe, that you have recovered your own esteem." Valancourt took her hand;—his eyes were covered with tears, and the farewell he would have spoken was lost in sighs. After a few moments, Emily said, with difficulty and emotion, "Farewell, Valancourt, may you be happy!" She repeated her "farewell," and attempted to withdraw her hand, but he still held it and bathed it with his tears. "Why prolong these moments?" said Emily, in a voice scarcely audible, "they are too painful to us both." "This is too—too much," exclaimed Valancourt, resigning her hand and throwing himself into a chair, where he covered his face with his hands and was overcome, for some moments, by convulsive sighs. After a long pause, during which Emily wept in silence, and Valancourt seemed struggling with his grief, she again rose to take leave of him. Then, endeavouring to recover his composure, "I am again afflicting you," said he, "but let the anguish I suffer plead for me." He then

then added, in a solemn voice, which frequently trembled with the agitation of his heart, "Farewell, Emily, you will always be the only object of my tenderness. Sometimes you will think of the unhappy Valancourt, and it will be with pity, though it may not be with esteem. O! what is the whole world to me, without you—without your esteem!" He checked himself—"I am falling again into the error I have just lamented. I must not intrude longer upon your patience, or I shall relapse into despair."

He once more bade Emily adieu, pressed her hand to his lips, looked at her, for the last time, and hurried out of the room.

Emily remained in the chair, where he had left her, oppressed with a pain at her heart, which scarcely permitted her to breathe, and listening to his departing steps, sinking fainter and fainter, as he crossed the hall. She was, at length, roused by the

voice of the Countess in the garden, and, her attention being then awakened, the first object, which struck her sight, was the vacant chair, where Valancourt had sat. The tears, which had been, for some time, repressed by the kind of astonishment, that followed his departure, now came to her relief, and she was, at length, sufficiently composed to return to her own room.

CH A P. III.

“ This is no mortal business, nor no sound
That the earth owes ! ”

SHAKESPEARE.

WE now return to the mention of Montoni, whose rage and disappointment were soon lost in nearer interests, than any, which the unhappy Emily had awakened. His depredations having exceeded their usual limits, and reached an extent, at which neither the timidity of the then commercial senate of Venice, nor their hope of his occasional assistance would permit them to connive, the same effort, it was resolved, should complete the suppression of his power and the correction of his outrages. While a corps of considerable strength was upon the point of receiving orders to march for Udolpho, a young officer, prompted partly by resentment,

ment, for some injury, received' from Montoni, and partly by the hope of distinction, solicited an interview with the Minister, who directed the enterprize. To him he represented, that the situation of Udolpho rendered it too strong to be taken by open force ; except after some tedious operations ; that Montoni had lately shewn how capable he was of adding to its strength all the advantages, which could be derived from the skill of a commander ; that so considerable a body of troops, as that allotted to the expedition, could not approach Udolpho without his knowledge, and that it was not for the honour of the republic to have a large part of its regular force employed, for such a time as the siege of Udolpho would require, upon the attack of a handful of banditti. The object of the expedition, he thought, might be accomplished much more safely and speedily by mingling contrivance with force. It was possible to meet Montoni and his party, without their walls, and to attack them then ; or, by ap-
 8 proaching

proaching the fortress, with the secrecy, consistent with the march of smaller bodies of troops, to take advantage either of the treachery, or negligence of some of his party, and to rush unexpectedly upon the whole even in the castle of Udolpho.

This advice was seriously attended to, and the officer, who gave it, received the command of the troops, demanded for his purpose. His first efforts were accordingly those of contrivance alone. In the neighbourhood of Udolpho, he waited till he had secured the assistance of several of the condottieri, of whom he found none, that he addressed, unwilling to punish their imperious master, and to secure their own pardon from the senate. He learned also the number of Montoni's troops, and that it had been much increased, since his late successes. The conclusion of his plan was soon effected. Having returned with his party, who received the watch-word and other assistance from their friends within, Montoni and his officers were surprised by one division, who had

been directed to their apartment, while the other maintained the slight combat, which preceded the surrender of the whole garrison. Among the persons, seized with Montoni, was Orfino, the assassin, who had joined him on his first arrival at Udolpho, and whose concealment had been made known to the senate by Count Morano, after the unsuccessful attempt of the latter to carry off Emily. It was, indeed, partly for the purpose of capturing this man, by whom one of the senate had been murdered, that the expedition was undertaken, and its success was so acceptable to them, that Morano was instantly released, notwithstanding the political suspicions, which Montoni, by his secret accusation, had excited against him. The celerity and ease, with which this whole transaction was completed, prevented it from attracting curiosity, or even from obtaining a place in any of the published records of that time; so that Emily, who remained in Languedoc, was ignorant of the defeat and signal humiliation of her late persecutor.

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Her mind was now occupied with sufferings, which no effort of reason had yet been able to controul. Count de Villefort, who sincerely attempted whatever benevolence could suggest for softening them, sometimes allowed her the solitude she wished for, sometimes led her into friendly parties, and constantly protected her, as much as possible, from the shrewd enquiries and critical conversation of the Countess. He often invited her to make excursions, with him and his daughter, during which he conversed entirely on questions, suitable to her taste, without appearing to consult it, and thus endeavoured gradually to withdraw her from the subject of her grief, and to awake other interests in her mind. Emily, to whom he appeared as the enlightened friend and protector of her youth, soon felt for him the tender affection of a daughter, and her heart expanded to her young friend Blanche, as to a sister, whose kindness and simplicity compensated for the want of more brilliant qualities. It was long before she could suf-

ficiently abstract her mind from Valancourt to listen to the story, promised by old Dorothée, concerning which her curiosity had once been so deeply interested; but Dorothée, at length, reminded her of it, and Emily desired, that she would come, that night, to her chamber.

Still her thoughts were employed by considerations, which weakened her curiosity, and Dorothée's tap at the door, soon after twelve, surprised her almost as much as if it had not been appointed. "I am come, at last, lady," said she; "I wonder what it is makes my old limbs shake so, to-night. I thought, once or twice, I should have dropped, as I was a-coming." Emily seated her in a chair, and desired, that she would compose her spirits, before she entered upon the subject, that had brought her thither. "Alas," said Dorothée, "it is thinking of that, I believe, which has disturbed me so. In my way hither too, I passed the chamber, where my dear lady died, and every thing was so still and gloomy
about

about me, that I almost fancied I saw her as she appeared upon her death-bed."

Emily now drew her chair near to Dorothee, who went on. "It is about twenty years since my lady Marchioness came a bride to the chateau. O! I well remember how she looked, when she came into the great hall, where we servants were all assembled to welcome her, and how happy my lord the Marquis seemed. Ah! who would have thought then!—But, as I was saying, ma'amselle, I thought the Marchioness, with all her sweet looks, did not look happy at heart, and so I told my husband, and he said it was all fancy; so I said no more, but I made my remarks, for all that. My lady Marchioness was then about your age, and, as I have often thought, very like you. Well! my lord the Marquis kept open house, for a long time, and gave such entertainments and there were such gay doings as have never been in the chateau since. I was younger, ma'amselle, then, than I am now, and was as gay as the best of

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them.

them. I remember I danced with Philip, the butler, in a pink gown, with yellow ribbons, and a coif, not such as they wear now, but plaited high, with ribbons all about it. It was very becoming truly ;—my lord, the Marquis, noticed me. Ah ! he was a good-natured gentleman then—who would have thought that he——”

“ But the Marchioness, Dorothee,” said Emily, “ you was telling me of her.”

“ O yes, my lady Marchioness, I thought she did not seem happy at heart, and once, soon after the marriage, I caught her crying in her chamber ; but, when she saw me, she dried her eyes, and pretended to smile. I did not dare then to ask what was the matter ; but, the next time I saw her crying, I did, and she seemed displeased ;—so I said no more. I found out, some time after, how it was. Her father, it seems, had commanded her to marry my lord, the Marquis, for his money, and there was another nobleman, or else a chevalier, that she liked better and that was very fond of her, and she fretted
for

for the loss of him, I fancy, but she never told me so. My lady always tried to conceal her tears from the Marquis, for I have often seen her, after she has been so sorrowful, look so calm and sweet, when he came into the room! But my lord, all of a sudden, grew gloomy and fretful, and very unkind sometimes to my lady. This afflicted her very much, as I saw, for she never complained, and she used to try so sweetly to oblige him and to bring him into a good humour, that my heart has often ached to see it. But he used to be stubborn, and give her harsh answers, and then, when she found it all in vain, she would go to her own room, and cry so! I used to hear her in the anti-room, poor dear lady! but I seldom ventured to go to her. I used, sometimes, to think my lord was jealous. To be sure my lady was greatly admired, but she was too good to deserve suspicion. Among the many chevaliers, that visited at the chateau, there was one, that I always thought seemed just suited for my lady; he was so courteous, yet

so spirited, and there was such a grace, as it were, in all he did, or said. I always observed, that, whenever he had been there, the Marquis was more gloomy and my lady more thoughtful, and it came into my head, that this was the chevalier she ought to have married, but I never could learn for certain."

"What was the chevalier's name, Dorothee?" said Emily.

"Why that I will not tell even to you, ma'amselle, for evil may come of it. I once heard from a person, who is since dead, that the Marchioness was not in law the wife of the Marquis, for that she had before been privately married to the gentleman she was so much attached to, and was afterwards afraid to own it to her father, who was a very stern man; but this seems very unlikely, and I never gave much faith to it. As I was saying, the Marquis was most out of humour, as I thought, when the chevalier I spoke of had been at the chateau, and, at last, his ill treatment of my lady made her quite

quite miserable. He would see hardly any visitors at the castle, and made her live almost by herself. I was her constant attendant, and saw all she suffered, but still she never complained.

“After matters had gone on thus, for near a year, my lady was taken ill, and I thought her long fretting had made her so,—but, alas! I fear it was worse than that.”

“Worse! Dorothee,” said Emily, “can that be possible?”

“I fear it was so, madam, there were strange appearances! But I will only tell what happened. My lord, the Marquis—”

“Hush, Dorothee, what sounds were those?” said Emily.

Dorothee changed countenance, and, while they both listened, they heard, on the stillness of the night, music of uncommon sweetness.

“I have surely heard that voice before!” said Emily, at length.

“I have often heard it, and at this same hour,” said Dorothee, solemnly, “and, if spi-
rits

rits ever bring music—that is surely the music of one !”

Emily, as the sounds drew nearer, knew them to be the same she had formerly heard at the time of her father’s death ; and, whether it was the remembrance they now revived of that melancholy event, or that she was struck with superstitious awe, it is certain she was so much affected, that she had nearly fainted.

“ I think I once told you, madam,” said Dorothée, “ that I first heard this music soon after my lady’s death ! I well remember the night !”——

“ Hark ! it comes again !” said Emily, “ let us open the window, and listen.”

They did so ; but, soon, the sounds floated gradually away into distance, and all was again still ; they seemed to have sunk among the woods, whose tufted tops were visible upon the clear horizon, while every other feature of the scene was involved in the night-shade, which, however, allowed the

the eye an indistinct view of some objects in the garden below.

As Emily leaned on the window, gazing with a kind of thrilling awe upon the obscurity beneath, and then upon the cloudless arch above, enlightened only by the stars, Dorothée, in a low voice, resumed her narrative.

“ I was saying, ma’amfelle, that I well remember when first I heard that music. It was one night, soon after my lady’s death, that I had sat up later than usual, and I don’t know how it was, but I had been thinking a great deal about my poor mistress, and of the sad scene I had lately witnessed. The chateau was quite still, and I was in a chamber at a good distance from the rest of the servants, and this, with the mournful things I had been thinking of, I suppose, made me low spirited, for I felt very lonely and forlorn, as it were, and listened often, wishing to hear a sound in the chateau, for you know, ma’amfelle, when one can hear people moving, one does not

so much mind, about one's fears. But all the servants were gone to bed, and I sat, thinking and thinking, till I was almost afraid to look round the room, and my poor lady's countenance often came to my mind, such as I had seen her when she was dying, and, once or twice, I almost thought I saw her before me,—when suddenly I heard such sweet music! It seemed just at my window, and I shall never forget what I felt. I had not power to move from my chair, but then, when I thought it was my dear lady's voice, the tears came to my eyes. I had often heard her sing in her life-time, and to be sure she had a very fine voice; it had made me cry to hear her, many a time, when she has sat in her oriel, of an evening, playing upon her lute such sad songs, and singing so. O! it went to one's heart! I have listened in the anti-chamber, for the hour together, and she would sometimes sit playing, with the window open, when it was summer time, till it was quite dark, and when I have gone in,

in, to shut it, she has hardly seemed to know what hour it was. But, as I said, madam," continued Dorothée, "when first I heard the music, that came just now, I thought it was my late lady's, and I have often thought so again, when I have heard it, as I have done at intervals, ever since. Sometimes, many months have gone by, but still it has returned."

"It is extraordinary," observed Emily, "that no person has yet discovered the musician."

"Aye, ma'amfelle, if it had been any thing earthly it would have been discovered long ago, but who could have courage to follow a spirit, and if they had, what good could it do?—for spirits, *you know*, ma'am, can take any shape, or no shape, and they will be here, one minute, and, the next perhaps, in a quite different place!"

"Pray resume your story of the Marchioness," said Emily, "and acquaint me with the manner of her death."

"I will, ma'am," said Dorothée, "but shall we leave the window?"

"This

“ This cool air refreshes me,” replied Emily, “ and I love to hear it creep along the woods, and to look upon this dusky landscape. You was speaking of my lord, the Marquis, when the music interrupted us.”

“ Yes, madam, my lord, the Marquis, became more and more gloomy ; and my lady grew worse and worse, till, one night, she was taken very ill, indeed. I was called up, and, when I came to her bed-side, I was shocked to see her countenance—it was so changed ! She looked piteously up at me, and desired I would call the Marquis again, for he was not yet come, and tell him she had something particular to say to him. At last, he came, and he did, to be sure, seem very sorry to see her, but he said very little. My lady told him she felt herself to be dying, and wished to speak with him alone, and then I left the room, but I shall never forget his look as I went.”

When I returned, I ventured to remind my lord about sending for a doctor, for I supposed he had forgot to do so, in his
grief ;

grief; but my lady said it was then too late; but my lord, so far from thinking so, seemed to think lightly of her disorder—till she was seized with such terrible pains! O, I never shall forget her shriek! My lord then sent off a man and horse for the doctor, and walked about the room and all over the chateau, in the greatest distress; and I staid by my dear lady, and did what I could to ease her sufferings. She had intervals of ease, and in one of these she sent for my lord again; when he came, I was going, but she desired I would not leave her. O! I shall never forget what a scene passed—I can hardly bear to think of it now! My lord was almost distracted, for my lady behaved with so much goodness, and took such pains to comfort him, that, if he ever had suffered a suspicion to enter his head, he must now have been convinced he was wrong. And to be sure he did seem to be overwhelmed with the thought of his treatment of her, and this affected her so much, that she fainted away.

“ We

“ We then got my lord out of the room ; he went into his library, and threw himself on the floor, and there he staid, and would hear no reason, that was talked to him. When my lady recovered, she enquired for him, but, afterwards, said she could not bear to see his grief, and desired we would let her die quietly. She died in my arms, ma’am-felle, and she went off as peacefully as a child, for all the violence of her disorder was passed.”

Dorothée paused, and wept, and Emily wept with her ; for she was much affected by the goodness of the late Marchioness, and by the meek patience, with which she had suffered.

“ When the doctor came,” resumed Dorothée, “ alas ! he came too late ; he appeared greatly shocked to see her, for soon after her death a frightful blackness spread all over her face. When he had sent the attendants out of the room, he asked me several odd questions about the Marchioness, particularly concerning the manner, in which she had been seized, and he often
shook

shook his head at my answers, and seemed to mean more, than he chose to say. But I understood him too well. However, I kept my remarks to myself, and only told them to my husband, who bade me hold my tongue. Some of the other servants, however, suspected what I did, and strange reports, were whispered about the neighbourhood, but nobody dared to make any stir about them. When my lord heard that my lady was dead, he shut himself up, and would see nobody but the doctor, who used to be with him alone, sometimes for an hour together; and, after that, the doctor never talked with me again about my lady. When she was buried in the church of the convent, at a little distance yonder (if the moon was up you might see the towers here, ma'amselle), all my lord's vassals followed the funeral, and there was not a dry eye among them, for she had done a deal of good among the poor. My lord, the Marquis, I never saw any body so melancholy as he was afterwards, and sometimes
he

he would be in such fits of violence, that we almost thought he had lost his senses. He did not stay long at the chateau, but joined his regiment, and, soon after, all the servants, except my husband and I, received notice to go, for my lord went to the wars. I never saw him after, for he would not return to the chateau, though it is such a fine place, and never finished those fine rooms he was building on the west side of it, and it has, in a manner, been shut up ever since, till my lord the Count came here."

"The death of the Marchioness appears extraordinary," said Emily, who was anxious to know more than she dared to ask.

"Yes, madam," replied Dorothée, "it was extraordinary; I have told you all I saw, and you may easily guess what I think. I cannot say more, because I would not spread reports, that might offend my lord the Count."

"You are very right," said Emily;—"where did the Marquis die?"—"In the north of France, I believe, ma'amselle," replied

plied Dorothée. “ I was very glad, when I heard my lord the Count was coming, for this had been a sad desolate place, these many years, and we heard such strange noises, sometimes, after my lady’s death, that, as I told you before, my husband and I left it for a neighbouring cottage. And now, lady, I have told you all this sad history, and all my thoughts, and you have promised, you know, never to give the least hint about it.”—“ I have,” said Emily, “ and I will be faithful to my promise, Dorothée;—what you have told has interested me more than you can imagine. I only wish I could prevail upon you to tell the name of the chevalier, whom you thought so deserving of the Marchioness.”

Dorothée, however, steadily refused to do this, and then returned to the notice of Emily’s likeness to the late Marchioness. “ There is another picture of her,” added she, “ hanging in a room of the suite which was shut up. It was drawn, as I have heard, before she was married, and is much more

more like you than the miniature." When Emily expressed a strong desire to see this, Dorothée replied, that she did not wish to open those rooms; but Emily reminded her, that the Count had talked the other day of ordering them to be opened; of which Dorothée seemed to consider much, and then she owned, that she should feel less, if she went into them with Emily first, than otherwise, and at length promised to shew the picture.

The night was too far advanced and Emily was too much affected by the narrative of the scenes, which had passed in those apartments, to desire to visit them at this hour; but she requested that Dorothée would return on the following night, when they were not likely to be observed, and conduct her thither. Besides her wish to examine the portrait, she felt a thrilling curiosity to see the chamber, in which the Marchioness had died, and which Dorothée had said remained, with the bed and furniture, just as when the corpse was removed

removed for interment. The solemn emotions, which the expectation of viewing such a scene had awakened, were in unison with the present tone of her mind, depressed by severe disappointment. Cheerful objects rather added to, than removed this depression; but, perhaps, she yielded too much to her melancholy inclination, and imprudently lamented the misfortune, which no virtue of her own could have taught her to avoid, though no effort of reason could make her look unmoved upon the self-degradation of him, whom she had once esteemed and loved.

Dorothée promised to return, on the following night, with the keys of the chambers, and then wished Emily good repose, and departed. Emily, however, continued at the window, musing upon the melancholy fate of the Marchioness and listening, in awful expectation, for a return of the music. But the stillness of the night remained long unbroken, except by the murmuring sounds of the woods, as they waved

in the breeze, and then by the distant bell of the convent, striking one. She now withdrew from the window, and, as she sat at her bed-side, indulging melancholy reveries, which the loneliness of the hour assisted, the stillness was suddenly interrupted, not by music, but by very uncommon sounds, that seemed to come either from the room adjoining her own, or from one below. The terrible catastrophe, that had been related to her, together with the mysterious circumstances, said to have since occurred in the chateau, had so much shocked her spirits, that she now sunk, for a moment, under the weakness of superstition. The sounds, however, did not return, and she retired, to forget in sleep the disastrous story she had heard.

C H A P. IV.

“ Now it is the time of night,
 That, the graves all gaping wide,
 Every one lets forth his sprite,
 In the church-way path to glide.”

SHAKESPEARE.

ON the next night, about the same hour as before, Dorothée came to Emily's chamber, with the keys of that suite of rooms, which had been particularly appropriated to the late Marchioness. These extended along the north side of the chateau, forming part of the old building; and, as Emily's room was in the south, they had to pass over a great extent of the castle, and by the chambers of several of the family, whose observations Dorothée was anxious to avoid, since it might excite enquiry and raise reports, such as would displease the Count. She, therefore, requested that Emily would wait half an hour, before they ventured

forth, that they might be certain all the servants were gone to bed. It was nearly one, before the chateau was perfectly still, or Dorothée thought it prudent to leave the chamber. In this interval, her spirits seemed to be greatly affected by the remembrance of past events, and by the prospect of entering again upon places, where these had occurred, and in which she had not been for so many years. Emily too was affected, but her feelings had more of solemnity, and less of fear. From the silence, into which reflection and expectation had thrown them, they, at length, roused themselves, and left the chamber. Dorothée, at first, carried the lamp, but her hand trembled so much with infirmity and alarm, that Emily took it from her, and offered her arm, to support her feeble steps.

They had to descend the great stair-case, and, after passing over a wide extent of the chateau, to ascend another, which led to the suite of rooms they were in quest of. They stepped cautiously along the open corridor,
that

that ran round the great hall, and into which the chambers of the Count, Countess, and the Lady Blanche, opened, and, from thence, descending the chief stair-case, they crossed the hall itself. Proceeding through the servants-hall, where the dying embers of a wood fire still glimmered on the hearth, and the supper table was surrounded by chairs, that obstructed their passage, they came to the foot of the back stair-case. Old Dorothée here paused, and looked around: "Let us listen," said she, "if any thing is stirring; Ma'amselle, do you hear any voice?" "None," said Emily, "there certainly is no person up in the chateau, besides ourselves."—"No, ma'amselle," said Dorothée, "but I have never been here at this hour before, and, after what I know, my fears are not wonderful."—"What do you know?" said Emily.—"O ma'amselle, we have no time for talking now; let us go on. That door on the left is the one we must open."

They proceeded, and, having reached the

top of the stair-case, Dorothée applied the key to the lock. "Ah," said she, as she endeavoured to turn it, "so many years have passed since this was opened, that I fear it will not move." Emily was more successful, and they presently entered a spacious and ancient chamber.

"Alas!" exclaimed Dorothée, as she entered, "the last time I passed through this door—I followed my poor lady's corpse!"

Emily, struck with the circumstance, and affected by the dusky and solemn air of the apartment, remained silent, and they passed on through a long suite of rooms, till they came to one more spacious than the rest, and rich in the remains of faded magnificence.

"Let us rest here awhile, madam," said Dorothée faintly, "we are going into the chamber, where my lady died! that door opens into it. Ah, ma'amfelle! why did you persuade me to come?"

Emily drew one of the massy arm-chairs, with which the apartment was furnished,
and

and begged Dorothée would sit down, and try to compose her spirits.

“ How the sight of this place brings all that passed formerly to my mind !” said Dorothée ; “ it seems as if it was but yesterday since all that sad affair happened !”

“ Hark ! what noise is that ?” said Emily.

Dorothée, half starting from her chair, looked round the apartment, and they listened—but, every thing remaining still, the old woman spoke again upon the subject of her sorrow. “ This saloon, ma’amselle, was in my lady’s time the finest apartment in the chateau, and it was fitted up according to her own taste. All this grand furniture, but you can now hardly see what it is for the dust, and our light is none of the best—ah ! how I have seen this room lighted up in my lady’s time !—all this grand furniture came from Paris, and was made after the fashion of some in the Louvre there, except those large glasses, and they came from some outlandish place, and that rich tapef-

try. How the colours are faded already !
—since I saw it last !”

“ I understood, that was twenty years ago,” observed Emily.

“ Thereabout, madam,” said Dorothée, “ and well remembered, but all the time between then and now seems as nothing. That tapestry used to be greatly admired at, it tells the stories out of some famous book, or other, but I have forgot the name.”

Emily now rose to examine the figures it exhibited, and discovered, by verses in the Provençal tongue, wrought underneath each scene, that it exhibited stories from some of the most celebrated ancient romances.

Dorothée’s spirits being now more composed, she rose, and unlocked the door that led into the late Marchioness’s apartment, and Emily passed into a lofty chamber, hung round with dark arras, and so spacious, that the lamp she held up did not shew its extent ; while Dorothée, when she entered, had dropped into a chair, where, sighing deeply, she scarcely trusted herself with the view of a scene so affecting to her.

It

It was some time before Emily perceived, through the dusk, the bed on which the Marchioness was said to have died ; when, advancing to the upper end of the room, she discovered the high canopied tester of dark green damask, with the curtains descending to the floor in the fashion of a tent, half-drawn, and remaining apparently as they had been left twenty years before ; and over the whole bedding was thrown a counterpane, or pall, of black velvet, that hung down to the floor. Emily shuddered, as she held the lamp over it, and looked within the dark curtains, where she almost expected to have seen a human face, and, suddenly remembering the horror she had suffered upon discovering the dying Madame Montoni in the turret chamber of Udolpho, her spirits fainted, and she was turning from the bed, when Dorothée, who had now reached it, exclaimed, “ Holy Virgin ! methinks I see my lady stretched upon that pall—as when last I saw her ! ”

Emily, shocked by this exclamation,

D 5

looked

looked involuntarily again within the curtains, but the blackness of the pall only appeared; while Dorothée was compelled to support herself upon the side of the bed, and presently tears brought her some relief.

“ Ah !” said she, after she had wept awhile, “ it was here I sat on that terrible night, and held my lady’s hand, and heard her last words, and saw all her sufferings—*here* she died in my arms !”

“ Do not indulge these painful recollections,” said Emily, “ let us go. Shew me the picture you mentioned, if it will not too much affect you.”

“ It hangs in the oriel,” said Dorothée rising, and going towards a small door near the bed’s head, which she opened, and Emily followed with the light, into the closet of the late Marchioness.

“ Alas ! there she is, ma’amfelle,” said Dorothée, pointing to a portrait of a lady, “ there is her very self ! just as she looked when she came first to the chateau. You
see,

see, madam, she was all blooming like you, then—and so soon to be cut off!”

While Dorothee spoke, Emily was attentively examining the picture, which bore a strong resemblance to the miniature, though the expression of the countenance in each was somewhat different; but still she thought she perceived something of that pensive melancholy in the portrait, which so strongly characterised the miniature.

“ Pray, ma’amfelle, stand beside the picture, that I may look at you together,” said Dorothee, who, when the request was complied with, exclaimed again at the resemblance. Emily also, as she gazed upon it, thought that she had somewhere seen a person very like it, though she could not now recollect who this was.

In this closet were many memorials of the departed Marchioness; a robe and several articles of her dress were scattered upon the chairs, as if they had just been thrown off. On the floor, were a pair of

black fatten slippers, and, on the dressing-table, a pair of gloves and a long black veil, which, as Emily took it up to examine, she perceived was dropping to pieces with age.

“ Ah !” said Dorothée, observing the veil, “ my lady’s hand laid it there ; it has never been moved since !”

Emily, shuddering, immediately laid it down again. “ I well remember seeing her take it off,” continued Dorothée, “ it was on the night before her death, when she had returned from a little walk I had persuaded her to take in the gardens, and she seemed refreshed by it. I told her how much better she looked, and I remember what a languid smile she gave me ; but, alas ! she little thought, or I either, that she was to die, that night.”

Dorothée wept again, and then, taking up the veil, threw it suddenly over Emily, who shuddered to find it wrapped round her, descending even to her feet, and, as she endeavoured to throw it off, Dorothée entreated

treated that she would keep it on for one moment. “ I thought,” added she, “ how like you would look to my dear mistress in that veil ;—may your life, ma’amfelle, be a happier one than hers !”

Emily, having disengaged herself from the veil, laid it again on the dressing-table, and surveyed the closet, where every object, on which her eye fixed, seemed to speak of the Marchioness. In a large oriel window of painted glass, stood a table, with a silver crucifix, and a prayer-book open ; and Emily remembered with emotion what Dorothee had mentioned concerning her custom of playing on her lute in this window, before she observed the lute itself, lying on a corner of the table, as if it had been carelessly placed there by the hand, that had so often awakened it.

“ This is a sad forlorn place !” said Dorothee, “ for, when my dear lady died, I had no heart to put it to rights, or the chamber either ; and my lord never came into the rooms after, so they remain just as they did

did when my lady was removed for interment."

While Dorothée spoke, Emily was still looking on the lute, which was a Spanish one, and remarkably large; and then, with a hesitating hand, she took it up, and passed her fingers over the chords. They were out of tune, but uttered a deep and full sound. Dorothée started at their well-known tones, and, seeing the lute in Emily's hand, said, "This is the lute my lady Marchioness loved so! I remember when last she played upon it—it was on the night that she died. I came as usual to undress her, and, as I entered the bed-chamber, I heard the sound of music from the oriel, and perceiving it was my lady's, who was sitting there, I stepped softly to the door, which stood a little open, to listen; for the music—though it was mournful—was so sweet! There I saw her, with the lute in her hand, looking upwards, and the tears fell upon her cheeks, while she sung a vesper hymn, so soft, and so solemn! and her voice trem-

trembled, as it were, and then she would stop for a moment, and wipe away her tears, and go on again, lower than before. O! I had often listened to my lady, but never heard any thing so sweet as this; it made me cry, almost, to hear it. She had been at prayers, I fancy, for there was the book open on the table beside her—aye, and there it lies open still! Pray, let us leave the oriel, *ma'amfelle*," added Dorothee, "this is a heart-breaking place!"

Having returned into the chamber, she desired to look once more upon the bed, when, as they came opposite to the open door, leading into the saloon, Emily, in the partial gleam, which the lamp threw into it, thought she saw something glide along into the obscurer part of the room. Her spirits had been much affected by the surrounding scene, or it is probable this circumstance, whether real or imaginary, would not have affected her in the degree it did; but she endeavoured to conceal her emotion from Dorothee, who, however, observ-
ing

ing her countenance change, enquired if she was ill.

“ Let us go,” said Emily, faintly, “ the air of these rooms is unwholesome ;” but, when she attempted to do so, considering that she must pass through the apartment where the phantom of her terror had appeared, this terror increased, and, too faint to support herself, she sat down on the side of the bed.

Dorothee, believing that she was only affected by a consideration of the melancholy catastrophe, which had happened on this spot, endeavoured to cheer her ; and then, as they sat together on the bed, she began to relate other particulars concerning it, and this without reflecting that it might increase Emily’s emotion, but because they were particularly interesting to herself. “ A little before my lady’s death,” said she, “ when the pains were gone off, she called me to her, and, stretching out her hand to me, I sat down just there—where the curtain falls upon the bed. How well I remember

member her look at the time—death was in it!—I can almost fancy I see her now.—There she lay, ma'amselle—her face was upon the pillow there! This black counterpane was not upon the bed then; it was laid on, after her death, and she was laid out upon it.”

Emily turned to look within the dusky curtains, as if she could have seen the countenance of which Dorothée spoke. The edge of the white pillow only appeared above the blackness of the pall, but, as her eyes wandered over the pall itself, she fancied she saw it move. Without speaking, she caught Dorothée's arm, who, surprised by the action, and by the look of terror that accompanied it, turned her eyes from Emily to the bed, where, in the next moment she, too, saw the pall slowly lifted, and fall again.

Emily attempted to go, but Dorothée stood fixed and gazing upon the bed; and, at length, said—“It is only the wind, that waves it, ma'amselle; we have left all the
doors

doors open : see how the air waves the lamp, too.—It is only the wind.”

She had scarcely uttered these words, when the pall was more violently agitated than before ; but Emily, somewhat ashamed of her terrors, stepped back to the bed, willing to be convinced that the wind only had occasioned her alarm ; when, as she gazed within the curtains, the pall moved again, and, in the next moment, the apparition of a human countenance rose above it,

Screaming with terror, they both fled, and got out of the chamber as fast as their trembling limbs would bear them, leaving open the doors of all the rooms, through which they passed. When they reached the stair-case, Dorothée threw open a chamber-door, where some of the female servants slept, and sunk breathless on the bed ; while Emily, deprived of all presence of mind, made only a feeble attempt to conceal the occasion of her terror from the astonished servants ; and, though Dorothée, when she could speak, endeavoured to laugh at her

own

own fright, and was joined by Emily, no remonstrances could prevail with the servants, who had quickly taken the alarm, to pass even the remainder of the night in a room so near to these terrific chambers.

• Dorothee having accompanied Emily to her own apartment, they then began to talk over, with some degree of coolness, the strange circumstance, that had just occurred; and Emily would almost have doubted her own perceptions, had not those of Dorothee attested their truth. Having now mentioned what she had observed in the outer chamber, she asked the house-keeper, whether she was certain no door had been left unfastened, by which a person might secretly have entered the apartments? Dorothee replied, that she had constantly kept the keys of the several doors in her own possession; that, when she had gone her rounds through the castle, as she frequently did, to examine if all was safe, she had tried these doors among the rest, and had always found them fastened. It
was,

was, therefore, impossible, she added, that any person could have got admittance into the apartments ; and, if they could—it was very improbable they should have chosen to sleep in a place so cold and forlorn.

Emily observed, that their visit to these chambers had, perhaps, been watched, and that some person, for a frolic, had followed them into the rooms, with a design to frighten them, and, while they were in the oriel, had taken the opportunity of concealing himself in the bed.

Dorothée allowed, that this was possible, till she recollected, that, on entering the apartments, she had turned the key of the outer door, and this, which had been done to prevent their visit being noticed by any of the family, who might happen to be up, must effectually have excluded every person, except themselves, from the chambers ; and she now persisted in affirming, that the ghastly countenance she had seen was nothing human, but some dreadful apparition.

Emily

Emily was very solemnly affected. Of whatever nature might be the appearance she had witnessed, whether human or supernatural, the fate of the deceased Marchioness was a truth not to be doubted; and this unaccountable circumstance, occurring in the very scene of her sufferings, affected Emily's imagination with a superstitious awe, to which, after having detected the fallacies at Udolpho, she might not have yielded, had she been ignorant of the unhappy story, related by the housekeeper. Her she now solemnly conjured to conceal the occurrence of this night, and to make light of the terror she had already betrayed, that the Count might not be distressed by reports, which would certainly spread alarm and confusion among his family. "Time," she added, "may explain this mysterious affair; meanwhile let us watch the event in silence."

Dorothée readily acquiesced; but she now recollected that she had left all the doors of the north suite of rooms open, and,
not

not having courage to return alone to lock even the outer one, Emily, after some effort, so far conquered her own fears, that she offered to accompany her to the foot of the back stair-case, and to wait there while Dorothée ascended, whose resolution being reassured by this circumstance, she consented to go, and they left Emily's apartment together.

No sound disturbed the stillness, as they passed along the halls and galleries; but, on reaching the foot of the back stair-case, Dorothée's resolution failed again: having, however, paused a moment to listen, and no sound being heard above, she ascended, leaving Emily below, and, scarcely suffering her eye to glance within the first chamber, she fastened the door, which shut up the whole suite of apartments, and returned to Emily.

As they stepped along the passage, leading into the great hall, a sound of lamentation was heard, which seemed to come from the hall itself, and they stopped in new

alarm to listen, when Emily presently distinguished the voice of Annette, whom she found crossing the hall, with another female servant, and so terrified by the report, which the other maids had spread, that, believing she could be safe only where her lady was, she was going for refuge to her apartment. Emily's endeavours to laugh, or to argue her out of these terrors, were equally vain, and, in compassion to her distress, she consented that she should remain in her room during the night.

C H A P. V.

“ Hail, mildly-pleasing Solitude !
Companion of the wise and good !

.....

Thine is the balmy breath of morn,
Just as the dew-bent rose is born.

.....

But chief when evening scenes decay
And the faint landscape swims away,
Thine is the doubtful, soft decline,
And that best hour of musing thine.”

THOMSON.

EMILY's injunctions to Annette to be silent on the subject of her terror were ineffectual, and the occurrence of the preceding night spread such alarm among the servants, who now all affirmed, that they had frequently heard unaccountable noises in the chateau, that a report soon reached the Count of the north side of the castle being haunted. He treated this, at first, with ridicule, but, perceiving, that it was productive of serious evil, in the confusion it occasioned among his household, he forbade any person to repeat it, on pain of punishment.

The arrival of a party of his friends soon withdrew his thoughts entirely from this subject, and his servants had now little leisure to brood over it, except, indeed, in the evenings after supper, when they all assembled in their hall, and related stories of ghosts, till they feared to look round the room; started, if the echo of a closing door murmured along the passage, and refused to go singly to any part of the castle.

On these occasions Annette made a distinguished figure. When she told not only of all the wonders she had witnessed, but of all that she had imagined, in the castle of Udolpho, with the story of the strange disappearance of Signora Laurentini, she made no trifling impression on the mind of her attentive auditors. Her suspicions, concerning Montoni, she would also have freely disclosed, had not Ludovico, who was now in the service of the Count, prudently checked her loquacity, whenever it pointed to that subject.

Among the visitors at the chateau was
 VOL. IV. E the

the Baron de Saint Foix, an old friend of the Count, and his son, the Chevalier St. Foix, a sensible and amiable young man, who, having in the preceding year seen the Lady Blanche, at Paris, had become her declared admirer. The friendship, which the Count had long entertained for his father, and the equality of their circumstances made him secretly approve of the connection; but, thinking his daughter at this time too young to fix her choice for life, and wishing to prove the sincerity and strength of the Chevalier's attachment, he then rejected his suit, though without forbidding his future hope. This young man now came, with the Baron his father, to claim the reward of a steady affection, a claim, which the Count admitted and which Blanche did not reject.

While these visitors were at the chateau, it became a scene of gaiety and splendour. The pavilion in the woods was fitted up and frequented, in the fine evenings, as a supper-room, when the hour usually con-
cluded

cluded with a concert, at which the Count and Countess, who were scientific performers, and the Chevaliers Henri and St. Foix, with the Lady Blanche and Emily, whose voices and fine taste compensated for the want of more skilful execution, usually assisted. Several of the Count's servants performed on horns and other instruments, some of which placed at a little distance among the woods, spoke, in sweet response, to the harmony, that proceeded from the pavilion.

At any other period, these parties would have been delightful to Emily ; but her spirits were now oppressed with a melancholy, which she perceived that no kind of what is called amusement had power to dissipate, and which the tender and, frequently, pathetic, melody of these concerts sometimes increased to a very painful degree.

She was particularly fond of walking in the woods, that hung on a promontory, overlooking the sea. Their luxuriant shade was soothing to her pensive mind, and, in the partial views, which they afforded of

the Mediterranean, with its winding shores and passing sails, tranquil beauty was united with grandeur. The paths were rude and frequently overgrown with vegetation, but their tasteful owner would suffer little to be done to them, and scarcely a single branch to be lopped from the venerable trees. On an eminence, in one of the most sequestered parts of these woods, was a rustic seat, formed of the trunk of a decayed oak, which had once been a noble tree, and of which many lofty branches still flourishing united with beech and pines to over-canopy the spot. Beneath their deep umbrage, the eye passed over the tops of other woods, to the Mediterranean, and, to the left, through an opening, was seen a ruined watch-tower, standing on a point of rock, near the sea, and rising from among the tufted foliage.

Hither Emily often came alone in the silence of evening, and, soothed by the scenery and by the faint murmur, that rose from the waves, would sit, till darkness obliged her to return to the chateau. Frequently,

quently, also, she visited the watch-tower, which commanded the entire prospect, and, when she leaned against its broken walls, and thought of Valancourt, she not once imagined, what was so true, that this tower had been almost as frequently his resort, as her own, since his estrangement from the neighbouring chateau.

One evening, she lingered here to a late hour. She had sat on the steps of the building, watching, in tranquil melancholy, the gradual effect of evening over the extensive prospect, till the gray waters of the Mediterranean and the massy woods were almost the only features of the scene, that remained visible; when, as she gazed alternately on these, and on the mild blue of the heavens, where the first pale star of evening appeared, she personified the hour in the following lines :—

SONG OF THE EVENING HOUR.

Last of the Hours, that track the fading Day,
I move along the realms of twilight air,
And hear, remote, the choral song decay
Of sister-nymphs, who dance around his car.

E 3

Then,

Then, as I follow through the azure void,
 His partial splendour from my straining eye
 Sinks in the depths of space ; my only guide
 His faint ray dawning on the farthest sky ;

Save that sweet, lingering strain of gayer Hours!
 Whose close my voice prolongs in dying notes,
 While mortals on the green earth own its pow'rs,
 As downward on the evening gale it floats.

When fades along the west the Sun's last beam
 As, weary, to the nether world he goes,
 And mountain-summits catch the purple gleam,
 And slumbering ocean faint and fainter glows,

Silent upon the globe's broad shade I steal,
 And o'er its dry turf shed the cooling dews,
 And ev'ry fever'd herb and flow'ret heal,
 And all their fragrance on the air diffuse.

Where'er I move, a tranquil pleasure reigns ;
 O'er all the scene the dusky tints I send,
 That forests wild and mountains, stretching plains
 And peopled towns, in soft confusion blend.

Wide o'er the world I waft the fresh'ning wind,
 Low breathing through the woods and twilight vale,
 In whispers soft, that woo the pensive mind
 Of him, who loves my lonely steps to hail.

His tender oaten reed I watch to hear,
 Stealing its sweetness o'er some plaining rill,
 Or soothing ocean's wave, when storms are near,
 Or swelling in the breeze from distant hill !

I wake

I wake the fairy elves, who shun the light ;
 When, from their blossom'd beds, they sily peep,
 And spy my pale star, leading on the night,—
 Forth to their games and revelry they leap ;

Send all the prison'd sweets abroad in air,
 That with them slumber'd in the flow'et's cell ;
 Then to the shores and moon-light brooks repair,
 Till the high larks their matin-carol swell.

The wood-nymphs hail my airs and temper'd shade,
 With ditties soft and lightly sportive dance,
 On river margin of some bow'ry glade,
 And strew their fresh buds as my steps advance :

But swift I pass, and distant regions trace,
 For moon-beams silver all the eastern cloud,
 And Day's last crimson vestige fades apace ;
 Down the steep west I fly from Midnight's shroud.

The moon was now rising out of the sea. She watched its gradual progress, the extending line of radiance it threw upon the waters, the sparkling oars, the sail faintly silvered, and the wood-tops and the battlements of the watch tower, at whose foot she was sitting, just tinted with the rays. Emily's spirits were in harmony with this scene. As she sat meditating, sounds stole by her on the air, which she immediately knew to be the music and the voice she had formerly heard at midnight, and the

emotion of awe, which she felt, was not unmixed with terror, when she considered her remote and lonely situation. The sounds drew nearer. She would have risen to leave the place, but they seemed to come from the way she must have taken towards the chateau, and she awaited the event in trembling expectation. The sounds continued to approach, for some time, and then ceased. Emily sat listening, gazing and unable to move, when she saw a figure emerge from the shade of the woods and pass along the bank, at some little distance before her. It went swiftly, and her spirits were so overcome with awe, that, though she saw, she did not much observe it.

Having left the spot, with a resolution never again to visit it alone, at so late an hour, she began to approach the chateau, when she heard voices calling her from the part of the wood, which was nearest to it. They were the shouts of the Count's servants, who were sent to search for her; and when she entered the supper-room, where
he

he sat with Henri and Blanche, he gently reproached her with a look, which she blushed to have deserved.

This little occurrence deeply impressed her mind, and, when she withdrew to her own room, it recalled so forcibly the circumstances she had witnessed, a few nights before, that she had scarcely courage to remain alone. She watched to a late hour, when, no sound having renewed her fears, she, at length, sunk to repose. But this was of short continuance, for she was disturbed by a loud and unusual noise, that seemed to come from the gallery, into which her chamber opened. Groans were distinctly heard, and, immediately after, a dead weight fell against her door, with a violence, that threatened to burst it open. She called loudly to know who was there, but received no answer, though, at intervals, she still thought she heard something like a low moaning. Fear deprived her of the power to move. Soon after, she heard

footsteps in a remote part of the gallery, and, as they approached, she called more loudly than before, till the steps paused at her door. She then distinguished the voices of several of the servants, who seemed too much engaged by some circumstance without, to attend to her calls; but, Annette soon after entering the room for water, Emily understood, that one of the maids had fainted, whom she immediately desired them to bring into her room, where she assisted to restore her. When this girl had recovered her speech, she affirmed, that, as she was passing up the back stair-case, in the way to her chamber, she had seen an apparition on the second landing-place; she held the lamp low, she said, that she might pick her way, several of the stairs being infirm and even decayed, and it was upon raising her eyes, that she saw this appearance. It stood for a moment in the corner of the landing-place, which she was approaching, and then, gliding up the stairs,

stairs, vanished at the door of the apartment, that had been lately opened. She heard afterwards a hollow sound.

“ Then the devil has got a key to that apartment,” said Dorothée, “ for it could be nobody but he ; I locked the door myself !”

The girl, springing down the stairs and passing up the great stair-case, had run, with a faint scream, till she reached the gallery, where she fell, groaning, at Emily’s door.

Gently chiding her for the alarm she had occasioned, Emily tried to make her ashamed of her fears ; but the girl persisted in saying, that she had seen an apparition, till she went to her own room, whither she was accompanied by all the servants present, except Dorothée, who, at Emily’s request, remained with her during the night. Emily was perplexed, and Dorothée was terrified, and mentioned many occurrences of former times, which had long since confirmed her superstitions ; among these, according to

her belief, she had once witnessed an appearance, like that just described, and on the very same spot, and it was the remembrance of it, that had made her pause, when she was going to ascend the stairs with Emily, and which had increased her reluctance to open the north apartments. Whatever might be Emily's opinions, she did not disclose them, but listened attentively to all that Dorothee communicated, which occasioned her much thought and perplexity.

From this night the terror of the servants increased to such an excess, that several of them determined to leave the chateau, and requested their discharge of the Count, who, if he had any faith in the subject of their alarm, thought proper to dissemble it, and, anxious to avoid the inconvenience that threatened him, employed ridicule and then argument to convince them they had nothing to apprehend from supernatural agency. But fear had rendered their minds inaccessible to reason; and it was now, that Ludovico proved at once his

his courage and his gratitude for the kindness he had received from the Count, by offering to watch, during a night, in the suite of rooms, reputed to be haunted. He feared, he said, no spirits, and, if any thing of human form appeared—he would prove that he dreaded that as little.

The Count paused upon the offer, while the servants, who heard it, looked upon one another in doubt and amazement, and Annette, terrified for the safety of Ludovico, employed tears and entreaties to dissuade him from his purpose.

“ You are a bold fellow,” said the Count, smiling, “ Think well of what you are going to encounter, before you finally determine upon it. However, if you persevere in your resolution, I will accept your offer, and your intrepidity shall not go unrewarded.”

“ I desire no reward, your *Excellenza*,” replied Ludovico, “ but your approbation. Your *Excellenza* has been sufficiently good to me already ; but I wish to have arms,
that

that I may be equal to my enemy, if he should appear."

"Your sword cannot defend you against a ghost," replied the Count, throwing a glance of irony upon the other servants, "neither can bars, or bolts; for a spirit, you know, can glide through a key-hole, as easily as through a door."

"Give me a sword, my lord Count," said Ludovico, "and I will lay all the spirits, that shall attack me, in the red sea."

"Well," said the Count, "you shall have a sword, and good cheer, too; and your brave comrades here will, perhaps, have courage enough to remain another night in the chateau, since your boldness will certainly, for this night, at least, confine all the malice of the spectre to yourself."

Curiosity now struggled with fear in the minds of several of his fellow servants, and, at length, they resolved to await the event of Ludovico's rashness.

Emily

Emily was surpris'd and concerned, when she heard of his intention, and was frequently inclined to mention what she had witnessed in the north apartments to the Count, for she could not entirely divest herself of fears for Ludovico's safety, though her reason represented these to be absurd. The necessity, however, of concealing the secret, with which Dorothee had entrusted her, and which must have been mentioned, with the late occurrence, in excuse for her having so privately visited the north apartments, kept her entirely silent on the subject of her apprehension; and she tried only to sooth Annette, who held, that Ludovico was certainly to be destroyed; and who was much less affected by Emily's consolatory efforts, than by the manner of old Dorothee, who often, as she exclaimed Ludovico, sighed, and threw up her eyes to heaven.

C H A P. VI.

“ Ye gods of quiet, and of sleep profound!
 Whose soft dominion o’er this castle sways,
 And all the widely-silent places round,
 Forgive me, if my trembling pen displays
 What never yet was sung in mortal lays.”

THOMSON.

THE Count gave orders for the north apartments to be opened and prepared for the reception of Ludovico ; but Dorothée, remembering what she had lately witnessed there, feared to obey, and, not one of the other servants daring to venture thither, the rooms remained shut up till the time when Ludovico was to retire thither for the night, an hour, for which the whole household waited with impatience.

After supper, Ludovico, by the order of the Count, attended him in his closet, where they remained alone for near half an hour, and, on leaving which, his Lord delivered to him a sword.

“ It

“ It has seen service in mortal quarrels,” said the Count, jocosely, “ you will use it honourably, no doubt, in a spiritual one. To-morrow let me hear that there is not one ghost remaining in the chateau.”

Ludovico received it with a respectful bow. “ You shall be obeyed, my Lord,” said he ; “ I will engage, that no spectre shall disturb the peace of the chateau after this night.”

They now returned to the supper-room, where the Count’s guests awaited to accompany him and Ludovico to the door of the north apartments, and Dorothee, being summoned for the keys, delivered them to Ludovico, who then led the way, followed by most of the inhabitants of the chateau. Having reached the back stair-case, several of the servants shrunk back, and refused to go further, but the rest followed him to the top of the stair-case, where a broad landing place allowed them to flock round him, while he applied the key to the door, during which they watched him with as
much

much eager curiosity as if he had been performing some magical rite.

Ludovico, unaccustomed to the lock, could not turn it, and Dorothée, who had lingered far behind, was called forward, under whose hand the door opened slowly, and, her eye glancing within the dusky chamber, she uttered a sudden shriek, and retreated. At this signal of alarm, the greater part of the crowd hurried down the stairs, and the Count, Henri and Ludovico were left alone to pursue the enquiry, who instantly rushed into the apartment, Ludovico with a drawn sword, which he had just time to draw from the scabbard, the Count with the lamp in his hand, and Henri carrying a basket, containing provision for the courageous adventurer.

Having looked hastily round the first room, where nothing appeared to justify alarm, they passed on to the second; and, here too all being quiet, they proceeded to a third in a more tempered step. The Count had now leisure to smile at the discomposure,

composure, into which he had been surprised, and to ask Ludovico in which room he designed to pass the night.

“ There are several chambers beyond these, your *Excellenza*,” said Ludovico, pointing to a door, “ and in one of them is a bed, they say. I will pass the night there, and when I am weary of watching, I can lie down.”

“ Good ;” said the Count, “ let us go on. You see these rooms shew nothing but damp walls and decaying furniture. I have been so much engaged since I came to the chateau, that I have not looked into them till now. Remember, Ludovico, to tell the housekeeper, to-morrow, to throw open these windows. The damask hangings are dropping to pieces, I will have them taken down, and this antique furniture removed.”

“ Dear sir !” said Henri, “ here is an arm-chair so massy with gilding, that it resembles one of the state chairs at the Louvre, more than any thing else.”

“ Yes,” said the Count, stopping a moment

ment to survey it, “ there is a history belonging to that chair, but I have not time to tell it.—Let us pass on. This suite runs to a greater extent than I had imagined ; it is many years since I was in them. But where is the bed-room you speak of, Ludovico ?—these are only anti-chambers to the great drawing room. I remember them in their splendour !”

“ The bed, my Lord,” replied Ludovico, “ they told me, was in a room that opens beyond the saloon, and terminates the suite.”

“ O, here is the saloon,” said the Count, as they entered the spacious apartment, in which Emily and Dorothée had rested. He here stood for a moment, surveying the reliques of faded grandeur, which it exhibited—the sumptuous tapestry—the long and low sofas of velvet, with frames heavily carved and gilded—the floor inlaid with small squares of fine marble, and covered in the centre with a piece of very rich tapestry work—the casements of painted glass, and the large Venetian mirrors, of a
size

size and quality, such as at that period France could not make, which reflected, on every side, the spacious apartment. These had formerly also reflected a gay and brilliant scene, for this had been the state-room of the chateau, and here the Marchioness had held the assemblies, that made part of the festivities of her nuptials. If the wand of a magician could have recalled the vanished groups, many of them vanished even from the earth ! that once had passed over these polished mirrors, what a varied and contrasted picture would they have exhibited with the present ! Now, instead of a blaze of lights, and a splendid and busy crowd, they reflected only the rays of the one glimmering lamp, which the Count held up, and which scarcely served to shew the three forlorn figures, that stood surveying the room, and the spacious and dusky walls around them.

“ Ah !” said the Count to Henri, awaking from his deep reverie, “ how the scene is changed since last I saw it ! I was a young

young man, then, and the Marchioness was alive and in her bloom ; many other persons were here, too, who are now no more ! There stood the orchestra ; here we tripped in many a sprightly maze—the walls echoing to the dance ! Now, they resound only one feeble voice—and even that will, ere long, be heard no more ! My son, remember, that I was once as young as yourself, and that you must pass away like those, who have preceded you—like those, who, as they sung and danced in this once gay apartment, forgot, that years are made up of moments, and that every step they took carried them nearer to their graves. But such reflections are useless, I had almost said criminal, unless they teach us to prepare for eternity, since, otherwise, they cloud our present happiness, without guiding us to a future one. But enough of this ; let us go on.”

Ludovico now opened the door of the bed-room, and the Count, as he entered, was struck with the funereal appearance,

which the dark arras gave to it. He approached the bed, with an emotion of solemnity, and, perceiving it to be covered with the pall of black velvet, paused; "What can this mean?" said he, as he gazed upon it.

"I have heard, my Lord," said Ludovico, as he stood at the feet, looking within the canopied curtains, "that the Lady Marchioness de Villeroi died in this chamber, and remained here till she was removed to be buried; and this, perhaps, Signor, may account for the pall."

The Count made no reply, but stood for a few moments engaged in thought, and evidently much affected. Then, turning to Ludovico, he asked him with a serious air, whether he thought his courage would support him through the night? "If you doubt this," added the Count, "do not be ashamed to own it; I will release you from your engagement, without exposing you to the triumphs of your fellow-servants."

Ludovico

Ludovico paused ; pride, and something very like fear, seemed struggling in his breast ; pride, however, was victorious ;— he blushed, and his hesitation ceased.

“ No, my Lord,” said he, “ I will go through with what I have begun ; and I am grateful for your consideration. On that hearth I will make a fire, and, with the good cheer in this basket, I doubt not I shall do well.”

“ Be it so,” said the Count ; “ but how will you beguile the tediousness of the night, if you do not sleep ?”

“ When I am weary, my Lord,” replied Ludovico, “ I shall not fear to sleep ; in the meanwhile I have a book that will entertain me.”

“ Well,” said the Count, “ I hope nothing will disturb you ; but if you should be seriously alarmed in the night, come to my apartment. I have too much confidence in your good sense and courage, to believe you will be alarmed on slight grounds ; or suffer the gloom of this chamber, or its remote situation,

situation, to overcome you with ideal terrors. To-morrow, I shall have to thank you for an important service; these rooms shall then be thrown open, and my people will be convinced of their error. Good night, Ludovico; let me see you early in the morning, and remember what I lately said to you."

"I will, my Lord; good night to your *Excellenza*; let me attend you with the light."

He lighted the Count and Henri through the chambers to the outer door: on the landing-place stood a lamp, which one of the affrighted servants had left, and Henri, as he took it up, again bade Ludovico good night, who, having respectfully returned the wish, closed the door upon them, and fastened it. Then, as he retired to the bed-chamber, he examined the rooms, through which he passed, with more minuteness than he had done before, for he apprehended that some person might have concealed himself in them, for the purpose

of frightening him. No one, however, but himself, was in these chambers, and, leaving open the doors, through which he passed, he came again to the great drawing-room, whose spaciousness and silent gloom somewhat awed him. For a moment he stood, looking back through the long suite of rooms he had quitted, and, as he turned, perceiving a light and his own figure, reflected in one of the large mirrors, he started. Other objects too were seen obscurely on its dark surface, but he paused not to examine them, and returned hastily into the bed-room, as he surveyed which, he observed the door of the oriel, and opened it. All within was still. On looking round, his eye was arrested by the portrait of the deceased Marchioness, upon which he gazed, for a considerable time, with great attention and some surprise; and then, having examined the closet, he returned into the bed-room, where he kindled a wood fire, the bright blaze of which revived his spirits, which had begun to yield
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to the gloom and silence of the place, for gusts of wind alone broke at intervals this silence. He now drew a small table and a chair near the fire, took a bottle of wine, and some cold provision out of his basket, and regaled himself. When he had finished his repast, he laid his sword upon the table, and, not feeling disposed to sleep, drew from his pocket the book he had spoken of.—It was a volume of old Provençal tales. Having stirred the fire into a brighter blaze, trimmed his lamp, and drawn his chair upon the hearth, he began to read, and his attention was soon wholly occupied by the scenes, which the page disclosed.

The Count, meanwhile, had returned to the supper-room, whither those of the party, who had attended him to the north apartment, had retreated, upon hearing Dorothee's scream, and who were now earnest in their enquiries concerning those chambers. The Count rallied his guests on their precipitate retreat, and on the superstitious inclination which had occasioned it, and this

led to the question, Whether the spirit, after it has quitted the body, is ever permitted to revisit the earth ; and if it is, whether it was possible for spirits to become visible to the sense. The Baron was of opinion, that the first was probable, and the last was possible, and he endeavoured to justify this opinion by respectable authorities, both ancient and modern, which he quoted. The Count, however, was decidedly against him, and a long conversation ensued, in which the usual arguments on these subjects were on both sides brought forward with skill, and discussed with candour, but without converting either party to the opinion of his opponent. The effect of their conversation on their auditors was various. Though the Count had much the superiority of the Baron in point of argument, he had considerably fewer adherents; for that love, so natural to the human mind, of whatever is able to distend its faculties with wonder and astonishment, attached the majority of the company to the side of the Baron; and, though many
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of the Count's propositions were unanswerable, his opponents were inclined to believe this the consequence of their own want of knowledge, on so abstracted a subject, rather than that arguments did not exist, which were forcible enough to conquer his.

Blanche was pale with attention, till the ridicule in her father's glance called a blush upon her countenance, and she then endeavoured to forget the superstitious tales she had been told in her convent. Meanwhile, Emily had been listening with deep attention to the discussion of what was to her a very interesting question, and, remembering the appearance she had witnessed in the apartment of the late Marchioness, she was frequently chilled with awe. Several times she was on the point of mentioning what she had seen, but the fear of giving pain to the Count, and the dread of his ridicule, restrained her; and, awaiting in anxious expectation the event of Ludovico's intrepidity, she determined that her future silence should depend upon it.

When the party had separated for the
F 3
night,

night, and the Count retired to his dressing-room, the remembrance of the desolate scenes he had lately witnessed in his own mansion deeply affected him, but at length he was aroused from his reverie and his silence. "What music is that I hear?"—said he suddenly to his valet, "Who plays at this late hour?"

The man made no reply, and the Count continued to listen, and then added, "That is no common musician; he touches the instrument with a delicate hand; who is it, Pierre?"

"My Lord!" said the man, hesitatingly.

"Who plays that instrument?" repeated the Count.

"Does not your lordship know, then?" said the valet.

"What mean you?" said the Count, somewhat sternly.

"Nothing, my Lord, I meant nothing," rejoined the man submissively—"Only—that music—goes about the house at midnight

night often, and I thought your lordship might have heard it before."

"Music goes about the house at midnight! Poor fellow!—does nobody dance to the music, too?"

"It is not in the chateau, I believe, my Lord; the sounds come from the woods, they say, though they seem so near;—but then a spirit can do any thing!"

"Ah, poor fellow!" said the Count, "I perceive you are as silly as the rest of them; to-morrow, you will be convinced of your ridiculous error. But hark!—what voice is that?"

"Oh, my Lord! that is the voice we often hear with the music."

"Often!" said the Count, "How often, pray? It is a very fine one."

"Why, my Lord, I myself have not heard it more than two or three times, but there are those who have lived here longer, that have heard it often enough."

"What a swell was that!" exclaimed the Count, as he still listened, "And now,

what a dying cadence! This is surely something more than mortal!"

"That is what they say, my Lord," said the valet; "they say it is nothing mortal, that utters it; and if I might say my thoughts"—

"Peace!" said the Count, and he listened till the strain died away.

"This is strange!" said he, as he turned from the window, "Close the casements, Pierre."

Pierre obeyed, and the Count soon after dismissed him, but did not so soon lose the remembrance of the music, which long vibrated in his fancy in tones of melting sweetness, while surprise and perplexity engaged his thoughts.

Ludovico, meanwhile, in his remote chamber, heard, now and then, the faint echo of a closing door, as the family retired to rest, and then the hall clock, at a great distance, strike twelve. "It is midnight," said he, and he looked suspiciously round the spacious chamber. The fire on the
hearth

hearth was now nearly expiring, for his attention having been engaged by the book before him, he had forgotten every thing besides; but he soon added fresh wood, not because he was cold, though the night was stormy, but because he was cheerless; and, having again trimmed his lamp, he poured out a glass of wine, drew his chair nearer to the crackling blaze, tried to be deaf to the wind, that howled mournfully at the casements, endeavoured to abstract his mind from the melancholy, that was stealing upon him, and again took up his book. It had been lent to him by Dorothée, who had formerly picked it up in an obscure corner of the Marquis's library, and who, having opened it and perceived some of the marvels it related, had carefully preserved it for her own entertainment, its condition giving her some excuse for detaining it from its proper station. The damp corner into which it had fallen, had caused the cover to be disfigured and mouldy, and the leaves to be so discoloured with spots, that it was not without

difficulty the letters could be traced. The fictions of the Provençal writers, whether drawn from the Arabian legends, brought by the Saracens into Spain, or recounting the chivalric exploits performed by the crusaders, whom the Troubadours accompanied to the east, were generally splendid and always marvellous, both in scenery and incident ; and it is not wonderful, that Dorothee and Ludovico should be fascinated by inventions, which had captivated the careless imagination in every rank of society, in a former age. Some of the tales, however, in the book now before Ludovico, were of simple structure, and exhibited nothing of the magnificent machinery and heroic manners, which usually characterized the fables of the twelfth century, and of this description was the one he now happened to open, which, in its original style, was of great length, but which may be thus shortly related. The reader will perceive, that it is strongly tinged with the superstition of the times.

THE

THE PROVENÇAL TALE.

“THERE lived, in the province of Bretagne, a noble Baron, famous for his magnificence and courtly hospitalities. His castle was graced with ladies of exquisite beauty, and thronged with illustrious knights; for the honours he paid to feats of chivalry invited the brave of distant countries to enter his lists, and his court was more splendid than those of many princes. Eight minstrels were retained in his service, who used to sing to their harps romantic fictions, taken from the Arabians, or adventures of chivalry, that befel knights during the crusades, or the martial deeds of the Baron, their lord;—while he, surrounded by his knights and ladies, banqueted in the great hall of his castle, where the costly tapestry, that adorned the walls with pictured exploits of his ancestors, the casements of painted glass, enriched with armorial bearings, the gorgeous banners, that waved along the roof, the sumptuous canopies, the profusion of gold

and silver, that glittered on the sideboards, the numerous dishes, that covered the tables, the number and gay liveries of the attendants, with the chivalric and splendid attire of the guests, united to form a scene of magnificence, such as we may not hope to see in these *degenerate days*.

“Of the Baron, the following adventure is related. One night, having retired late from the banquet to his chamber, and dismissed his attendants, he was surprised by the appearance of a stranger of a noble air, but of a sorrowful and dejected countenance. Believing, that this person had been secreted in the apartment, since it appeared impossible he could have lately passed the anti-room, unobserved by the pages in waiting, who would have prevented this intrusion on their lord, the Baron, calling loudly for his people, drew his sword, which he had not yet taken from his side, and stood upon his defence. The stranger slowly advancing, told him, that there was nothing to fear; that he came with no hostile design, but to communicate

communicate to him a terrible secret, which it was necessary for him to know.

“ The Baron, appeased by the courteous manners of the stranger, after surveying him, for some time, in silence, returned his sword into the scabbard, and desired him to explain the means, by which he had obtained access to the chamber, and the purpose of this extraordinary visit.

“ Without answering either of these enquiries, the stranger said, that he could not then explain himself, but that, if the Baron would follow him to the edge of the forest, at a short distance from the castle walls, he would there convince him, that he had something of importance to disclose.

“ This proposal again alarmed the Baron, who would scarcely believe, that the stranger meant to draw him to so solitary a spot, at this hour of the night, without harbouring a design against his life ; and he refused to go, observing at the same time, that, if the stranger’s purpose was an honourable one, he would not persist in refusing to reveal the
occasion

occasion of his visit, in the apartment where they were.

“ While he spoke this, he viewed the stranger still more attentively than before, but observed no change in his countenance, or any symptom, that might intimate a consciousness of evil design. He was habited like a knight, was of a tall and majestic stature, and of dignified and courteous manners. Still, however, he refused to communicate the subject of his errand in any place, but that he had mentioned, and, at the same time, gave hints concerning the secret he would disclose, that awakened a degree of solemn curiosity in the Baron, which, at length, induced him to consent to follow the stranger, on certain conditions.

“ Sir knight,” said he, “ I will attend you to the forest, and will take with me only four of my people, who shall witness our conference.”

“ To this, however, the knight objected.

“ What I would disclose,” said he, with solemnity, “ is to you alone. There are only

only three living persons, to whom the circumstance is known ; it is of more consequence to you and your house, than I shall now explain. In future years, you will look back to this night with satisfaction or repentance, accordingly as you now determine. As you would hereafter prosper—follow me ; I pledge you the honour of a knight, that no evil shall befall you ;—if you are contented to dare futurity—remain in your chamber, and I will depart as I came.”

“ Sir knight,” replied the Baron, “ how is it possible, that my future peace can depend upon my present determination ?”

“ That is not now to be told,” said the stranger, “ I have explained myself to the utmost. It is late ; if you follow me it must be quickly ;—you will do well to consider the alternative.”

“ The Baron mused, and, as he looked upon the knight, he perceived his countenance assume a singular solemnity.”

[Here Ludovico thought he heard a noise, and he threw a glance round the chamber,
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and then held up the lamp to assist his observation ; but, not perceiving any thing to confirm his alarm, he took up the book again and pursued the story.]

“ The Baron paced his apartment, for some time, in silence, impressed by the words of the stranger, whose extraordinary request he feared to grant, and feared, also, to refuse. At length, he said, “ Sir knight, you are utterly unknown to me ; tell me, yourself,—is it reasonable, that I should trust myself alone with a stranger, at this hour, in a solitary forest ? Tell me, at least, who you are, and who assisted to secrete you in this chamber.”

“ The knight frowned at these latter words, and was a moment silent ; then, with a countenance somewhat stern, he said,

“ I am an English knight ; I am called Sir Bevys of Lancaster,—and my deeds are not unknown at the Holy City, whence I was returning to my native land, when I was benighted in the neighbouring forest.”

“ Your name is not unknown to fame,”
said

said the Baron, " I have heard of it." (The knight looked haughtily.) " But why, since my castle is known to entertain all true knights, did not your herald announce you? Why did you not appear at the banquet, where your presence would have been welcomed, instead of hiding yourself in my castle and stealing to my chamber, at midnight?"

"The stranger frowned, and turned away in silence; but the Baron repeated the questions.

" I come not," said the knight, " to answer enquiries, but to reveal facts. If you would know more, follow me, and again I pledge the honour of a knight, that you shall return in safety.—Be quick in your determination—I must be gone."

" After some further hesitation, the Baron determined to follow the stranger, and to see the result of his extraordinary request; he, therefore, again drew forth his sword, and, taking up a lamp, bade the knight lead on. The latter obeyed, and, opening the door of the chamber, they passed into the
anti-

anti-room, where the Baron, surprised to find all his pages asleep, stopped, and, with hasty violence, was going to reprimand them for their carelessness, when the knight waved his hand, and looked so expressively upon the Baron, that the latter restrained his resentment, and passed on.

“ The knight, having descended a staircase, opened a secret door, which the Baron had believed was known only to himself, and proceeding through several narrow and winding passages, came, at length, to a small gate, that opened beyond the walls of the castle. Meanwhile, the Baron followed in silence and amazement, on perceiving that these secret passages were so well known to a stranger, and felt inclined to return from an adventure, that appeared to partake of treachery, as well as danger. Then, considering that he was armed, and observing the courteous and noble air of his conductor, his courage returned, he blushed, that it had failed him for a moment, and he resolved to trace the mystery to its source.

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“ He now found himself on the heathy platform, before the great gates of his castle, where, on looking up, he perceived lights glimmering in the different casements of the guests, who were retiring to sleep; and, while he shivered in the blast, and looked on the dark and desolate scene around him, he thought of the comforts of his warm chamber, rendered cheerful by the blaze of wood, and felt, for a moment, the full contrast of his present situation.”

[Here Ludovico paused a moment, and, looking at his own fire, gave it a brightening stir.]

“ The wind was strong, and the Baron watched his lamp with anxiety, expecting every moment to see it extinguished; but though the flame wavered, it did not expire, and he still followed the stranger, who often sighed as he went, but did not speak.

“ When they reached the borders of the forest, the knight turned, and raised his head, as if he meant to address the Baron, but then, closing his lips in silence, he walked on.

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“ As they entered, beneath the dark and spreading boughs, the Baron, affected by the solemnity of the scene, hesitated whether to proceed, and demanded how much further they were to go. The knight replied only by a gesture, and the Baron, with hesitating steps and a suspicious eye, followed through an obscure and intricate path, till, having proceeded a considerable way, he again demanded whither they were going, and refused to proceed unless he was informed.

“ As he said this, he looked at his own sword, and at the knight alternately, who shook his head, and whose dejected countenance disarmed the Baron, for a moment, of suspicion.

“ A little further is the place, whither I would lead you,” said the stranger; “ no evil shall befall you—I have sworn it on the honour of a knight.”

“ The Baron, reassured, again followed in silence, and they soon arrived at a deep recess of the forest, where the dark and lofty
chestsnuts

chestnuts entirely excluded the sky, and which was so overgrown with underwood, that they proceeded with difficulty. The Knight sighed deeply as he passed, and sometimes paused; and having, at length, reached a spot, where the trees crowded into a knot, he turned, and, with a terrific look, pointing to the ground, the Baron saw there the body of a man, stretched at its length, and weltering in blood; a ghastly wound was on the forehead, and death appeared already to have contracted the features.

“The Baron, on perceiving the spectacle, started in horror, looked at the knight for explanation, and was then going to raise the body and examine if there were yet any remains of life; but the stranger, waving his hand, fixed upon him a look so earnest and mournful, as not only much surprised him, but made him desist.

“But, what were the Baron’s emotions, when, on holding the lamp near the features of the corpse, he discovered the exact resemblance of the stranger his conductor, to whom

whom he now looked up in astonishment and enquiry? As he gazed, he perceived the countenance of the knight change, and begin to fade, till his whole form gradually vanished from his astonished sense! While the Baron stood, fixed to the spot, a voice was heard to utter these words:—”

[Ludovico started, and laid down the book, for he thought he heard a voice in the chamber, and he looked toward the bed, where, however, he saw only the dark curtains and the pall. He listened, scarcely daring to draw his breath, but heard only the distant roaring of the sea in the storm, and the blast, that rushed by the casements; when, concluding, that he had been deceived by its sighings, he took up his book to finish the story.]

“ While the Baron stood, fixed to the spot, a voice was heard to utter these words:—

“ The body of Sir Bevys of Lancaster, a noble knight of England, lies before you. He was, this night, way-laid and murdered, as he journeyed from the Holy City towards
his

his native land. Respect the honour of knighthood and the law of humanity; inter the body in christian ground, and cause his murderers to be punished. As ye observe, or neglect this, shall peace and happiness, or war and misery, light upon you and your house for ever !”

“The Baron, when he recovered from the awe and astonishment, into which this adventure had thrown him, returned to his castle, whither he caused the body of Sir Bevys to be removed ; and, on the following day, it was interred, with the honours of knighthood, in the chapel of the castle, attended by all the noble knights and ladies who graced the court of the Baron de Brunne.”

Ludovico, having finished this story, laid aside the book, for he felt drowsy, and, after putting more wood on the fire and taking another glass of wine, he reposed himself in the arm chair on the hearth. In his dream he still beheld the chamber where he really was,
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and, once or twice, started from imperfect slumbers, imagining he saw a man's face, looking over the high back of his arm-chair. This idea had so strongly impressed him, that, when he raised his eyes, he almost expected to meet other eyes, fixed upon his own, and he quitted his seat and looked behind the chair, before he felt perfectly convinced, that no person was there.

Thus closed the hour.

C H A P. VII.

“ Enjoy the honey-heavy dew of slumber ;
 Thou hast no figures, nor no fantasies,
 Which busy care draws in the brains of men ;
 Therefore thou sleep’st so sound. ”

SHAKESPEARE.

THE Count, who had slept little during the night, rose early, and, anxious to speak with Ludovico, went to the north apartment ; but, the outer door having been fastened, on the preceding night, he was obliged to knock loudly for admittance. Neither the knocking, or his voice, was heard ; but, considering the distance of this door from the bed-room, and that Ludovico, wearied with watching, had probably fallen into a deep sleep, the Count was not surprised on receiving no answer, and, leaving the door, he went down to walk in his grounds.

It was a gray autumnal morning. The
 VOL. IV. G sun,

sun, rising over Provence, gave only a feeble light, as his rays struggled through the vapours that ascended from the sea, and floated heavily over the wood-tops, which were now varied with many a mellow tint of autumn. The storm was passed, but the waves were yet violently agitated, and their course was traced by long lines of foam, while not a breeze fluttered in the sails of the vessels, near the shore, that were weighing anchor to depart. The still gloom of the hour was pleasing to the Count, and he pursued his way through the woods, sunk in deep thought.

Emily also rose at an early hour, and took her customary walk along the brow of the promontory, that overhung the Mediterranean. Her mind was now not occupied with the occurrences of the chateau, and Valancourt was the subject of her mournful thoughts; whom she had not yet taught herself to consider with indifference, though her judgment constantly reproached her for the affection, that lingered
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in her heart, after her esteem for him was departed. Remembrance frequently gave her his parting look and the tones of his voice, when he had bade her a last farewell; and, some accidental associations now recalling these circumstances to her fancy, with peculiar energy, she shed bitter tears to the recollection.

Having reached the watch-tower, she seated herself on the broken steps, and, in melancholy dejection, watched the waves, half hid in vapour, as they came rolling towards the shore, and threw up their light spray round the rocks below. Their hollow murmur and the obscuring mists, that came in wreaths up the cliffs, gave a solemnity to the scene, which was in harmony with the temper of her mind, and she sat, given up to the remembrance of past times, till this became too painful, and she abruptly quitted the place. On passing the little gate of the watch-tower, she observed letters, engraved on the stone postern, which she paused to examine, and, though they

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appeared

appeared to have been rudely cut with a pen-knife, the characters were familiar to her; at length, recognizing the hand-writing of Valancourt, she read, with trembling anxiety, the following lines, entitled

SHIPWRECK.

'Tis solemn midnight! On this lonely steep,
 Beneath this watch-tow'r's desolated wall,
 Where mystic shapes the wonderer appall,
 I rest; and view below the desert deep,
 As through tempestuous clouds the moon's cold light
 Gleams on the wave. Viewless, the winds of night
 With loud mysterious force the billows sweep,
 And sullen roar the surges, far below.
 In the still pauses of the gust I hear
 The voice of spirits, rising sweet and slow,
 And oft among the clouds their forms appear.
 But hark! what shriek of death comes in the gale,
 And in the distant ray what glimmering sail
 Bends to the storm?—Now sinks the note of fear!
 Ah! wretched mariners!—no more shall day
 Unclose his cheering eye to light ye on your way!

From these lines it appeared, that Valancourt had visited the tower; that he had probably been here on the preceding night,
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for it was such an one as they described, and that he had left the building very lately, since it had not long been light, and without light it was impossible these letters could have been cut. It was thus even probable, that he might be yet in the gardens.

As these reflections passed rapidly over the mind of Emily, they called up a variety of contending emotions, that almost overcame her spirits; but her first impulse was to avoid him, and, immediately leaving the tower, she returned, with hasty steps, towards the chateau. As she passed along she remembered the music she had lately heard near the tower, with the figure, which had appeared, and, in this moment of agitation, she was inclined to believe, that she had then heard and seen Valancourt; but other recollections soon convinced her of her error. On turning into a thicker part of the woods, she perceived a person, walking slowly in the gloom at some little distance, and, her mind engaged by the

idea of him, she started and paused, imagining this to be Valancourt. The person advanced with quicker steps, and, before she could recover recollection enough to avoid him, he spoke, and she then knew the voice of the Count, who expressed some surprise, on finding her walking at so early an hour, and made a feeble effort to rally her on her love of solitude. But he soon perceived this to be more a subject of concern than of light laughter, and, changing his manner, affectionately expostulated with Emily, on thus indulging unavailing regret; who, though she acknowledged the justness of all he said, could not restrain her tears, while she did so, and he presently quitted the topic. Expressing surprise at not having yet heard from his friend, the Advocate at Avignon, in answer to the questions proposed to him, respecting the estates of the late Madame Montoni, he, with friendly zeal, endeavoured to cheer Emily with hopes of establishing her claim to them; while she felt, that the estates could now con-

contribute little to the happiness of a life, in which Valancourt had no longer an interest.

When they returned to the chateau, Emily retired to her apartment, and Count De Villefort to the door of the north chambers. This was still fastened; but, being now determined to arouse Ludovico, he renewed his calls more loudly than before; after which a total silence ensued, and the Count, finding all his efforts to be heard ineffectual, at length began to fear, that some accident had befallen Ludovico, whom terror of an imaginary being might have deprived of his senses. He, therefore, left the door with an intention of summoning his servants to force it open, some of whom he now heard moving in the lower part of the chateau.

To the Count's enquiries, whether they had seen or heard Ludovico, they replied in affright, that not one of them had ventured on the north side of the chateau, since the preceding night.

“ He sleeps soundly then,” said the Count, “ and is at such a distance from the outer door, which is fastened, that to gain admittance to the chambers it will be necessary to force it. Bring an instrument, and follow me.”

The servants stood mute and dejected, and it was not till nearly all the household were assembled, that the Count's orders were obeyed. In the mean time Dorothée was telling of a door, that opened from a gallery, leading from the great stair-case into the last anti-room of the saloon, and, this being much nearer to the bed chamber, it appeared probable that Ludovico might be easily awakened by an attempt to open it. Thither, therefore, the Count went, but his voice was as ineffectual at this door as it had proved at the remoter one ; and now, seriously interested for Ludovico, he was himself going to strike upon the door with the instrument, when he observed its singular beauty, and with-held the blow. It appeared, on the first glance,

to be of ebony, so dark and close was its grain and so high its polish; but it proved to be only of larch wood, of the growth of Provence, then famous for its forests of larch. The beauty of its polished hue and of its delicate carvings determined the Count to spare this door, and he returned to that leading from the back stair-case, which being, at length, forced, he entered the first anti-room, followed by Henri and a few of the most courageous of his servants, the rest awaiting the event of the enquiry on the stairs and landing-place.

All was silent in the chambers, through which the Count passed, and, having reached the saloon, he called loudly upon Ludovico; after which, still receiving no answer, he threw open the door of the bed-room, and entered.

The profound stillness within confirmed his apprehensions for Ludovico, for not even the breathings of a person in sleep were heard; and his uncertainty was not soon ter-

minated, since, the shutters being all closed, the chamber was too dark for any object to be distinguished in it.

The Count bade a servant open them, who, as he crossed the room to do so, stumbled over something, and fell to the floor, when his cry occasioned such panic among the few of his fellows, who had ventured thus far, that they instantly fled, and the Count and Henri were left to finish the adventure.

Henri then sprung across the room, and, opening a window-shutter, they perceived, that the man had fallen over a chair near the hearth, in which Ludovico had been sitting;—for he sat there no longer, nor could any where be seen by the imperfect light that was admitted into the apartment. The Count, seriously alarmed, now opened other shutters, that he might be enabled to examine further, and, Ludovico not yet appearing, he stood for a moment, suspended in astonishment, and scarcely trusting his senses, till, his eyes glancing on the bed, he
advanced

advanced to examine whether he was there asleep. No person, however, was in it, and he proceeded to the oriel, where every thing remained as on the preceding night, but Ludovico was no where to be found.

The Count now checked his amazement, considering, that Ludovico might have left the chambers, during the night, overcome by the terrors, which their lonely desolation and the recollected reports, concerning them, had inspired. Yet, if this had been the fact, the man would naturally have sought society, and his fellow servants had all declared they had not seen him; the door of the outer room also had been found fastened, with the key on the inside; it was impossible, therefore, for him to have passed through that, and all the outer doors of this suite were found, on examination, to be bolted and locked, with the keys also within them. The Count, being then compelled to believe, that the lad had escaped through the casements, next examined them; but such as opened wide

enough to admit the body of a man were found to be carefully secured either by iron bars, or by shutters, and no vestige appeared of any person having attempted to pass them; neither was it probable, that Ludovico would have incurred the risque of breaking his neck, by leaping from a window, when he might have walked safely through a door.

The Count's amazement did not admit of words; but he returned once more to examine the bed-room, where was no appearance of disorder, except that occasioned by the late overthrow of the chair, near which had stood a small table, and on this Ludovico's sword, his lamp, the book he had been reading, and the remnant of his flask of wine still remained. At the foot of the table, too, was the basket with some fragments of provision and wood.

Henri and the servant now uttered their astonishment without reserve, and, though the Count said little, there was a seriousness in his manner that expressed much. It appeared,

peared, that Ludovico must have quitted these rooms by some concealed passage, for the Count could not believe, that any supernatural means had occasioned this event; yet, if there was any such passage, it seemed inexplicable why he should retreat through it, and it was equally surprising, that not even the smallest vestige should appear, by which his progress could be traced. In the rooms every thing remained as much in order as if he had just walked out by the common way.

The Count himself assisted in lifting the arras, with which the bed-chamber, saloon and one of the anti-rooms were hung, that he might discover if any door had been concealed behind it; but, after a laborious search, none was found, and he, at length, quitted the apartments, having secured the door of the last anti-chamber, the key of which he took into his own possession. He then gave orders, that strict search should be made for Ludovico not only in the chateau, but in the neighbourhood, and, retir-
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ing with Henri to his closet, they remained there in conversation for a considerable time; and whatever was the subject of it, Henri from this hour lost much of his vivacity, and his manners were particularly grave and reserved, whenever the topic, which now agitated the Count's family with wonder and alarm, was introduced.

On the disappearing of Ludovico, Baron St. Foix seemed strengthened in all his former opinions concerning the probability of apparitions, though it was difficult to discover what connection there could possibly be between the two subjects, or to account for this effect otherwise than by supposing, that the mystery attending Ludovico, by exciting awe and curiosity, reduced the mind to a state of sensibility, which rendered it more liable to the influence of superstition in general. It is, however, certain, that from this period the Baron and his adherents became more bigoted to their own systems than before, while the terrors of the Count's servants increased to an excess,
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that occasioned many of them to quit the mansion immediately, and the rest remained only till others could be procured to supply their places.

The most strenuous search after Ludovico proved unsuccessful, and, after several days of indefatigable enquiry, poor Annette gave herself up to despair, and the other inhabitants of the chateau to amazement.

Emily, whose mind had been deeply-affected by the disastrous fate of the late Marchioness and with the mysterious connection, which she fancied had existed between her and St. Aubert, was particularly impressed by the late extraordinary event, and much concerned for the loss of Ludovico, whose integrity and faithful services claimed both her esteem and gratitude. She was now very desirous to return to the quiet retirement of her convent, but every hint of this was received with real sorrow by the Lady Blanche, and affectionately set aside by the Count, for whom she felt much of
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the respectful love and admiration of a daughter, and to whom, by Dorothée's consent, she, at length, mentioned the appearance, which they had witnessed in the chamber of the deceased Marchioness. At any other period, he would have smiled at such a relation, and have believed, that its object had existed only in the distempered fancy of the relater; but he now attended to Emily with seriousness, and, when she concluded, requested of her a promise, that this occurrence should rest in silence. "Whatever may be the cause and the import of these extraordinary occurrences," added the Count, "time only can explain them. I shall keep a wary eye upon all that passes in the chateau, and shall pursue every possible means of discovering the fate of Ludovico. Meanwhile, we must be prudent and be silent. I will myself watch in the north chambers, but of this we will say nothing, till the night arrives, when I purpose doing so."

The Count then sent for Dorothée, and
required

required of her also a promise of silence, concerning what she had already, or might in future witness of an extraordinary nature; and this ancient servant now related to him the particulars of the Marchioness de Villeroi's death, with some of which he appeared to be already acquainted, while by others he was evidently surprised and agitated. After listening to this narrative, the Count retired to his closet, where he remained alone for several hours; and, when he again appeared, the solemnity of his manner surprised and alarmed Emily, but she gave no utterance to her thoughts.

On the week following the disappearance of Ludovico, all the Count's guests took leave of him, except the Baron, his son Monf. St. Foix, and Emily: the latter of whom was soon after embarrassed and distressed by the arrival of another visitor, Monf. Du Pont, which made her determine upon withdrawing to her convent immediately. The delight, that appeared in his countenance, when he met her, told that

that he brought back the same ardour of passion, which had formerly banished him from Chateau-le-Blanc. He was received with reserve by Emily, and with pleasure by the Count, who presented him to her with a smile, that seemed intended to plead his cause, and who did not hope the less for his friend, from the embarrassment she betrayed.

But M. Du Pont, with truer sympathy, seemed to understand her manner, and his countenance quickly lost its vivacity, and sunk into the languor of despondency.

On the following day, however, he sought an opportunity of declaring the purport of his visit, and renewed his suit; a declaration, which was received with real concern by Emily, who endeavoured to lessen the pain she might inflict by a second rejection, with assurances of esteem and friendship; yet she left him in a state of mind, that claimed and excited her tenderest compassion; and, being more sensible than ever of the impropriety of remaining longer at the
chateau,

chateau, she immediately sought the Count, and communicated to him her intention of returning to the convent.

“ My dear Emily,” said he, “ I observe, with extreme concern, the illusion you are encouraging—an illusion common to young and sensible minds. Your heart has received a severe shock ; you believe you can never entirely recover it, and you will encourage this belief, till the habit of indulging sorrow will subdue the strength of your mind, and discolour your future views with melancholy regret. Let me dissipate this illusion, and awaken you to a sense of your danger.”

Emily smiled mournfully. “ I know what you would say, my dear sir,” said she, “ and am prepared to answer you. I feel, that my heart can never know a second affection ; and that I must never hope even to recover its tranquillity—if I suffer myself to enter into a second engagement.”

“ I know, that you feel all this,” replied the Count ; “ and I know, also, that time
will

will overcome these feelings, unless you cherish them in solitude, and, pardon me, with romantic tenderness. Then, indeed, time will only confirm habit. I am particularly empowered to speak on this subject, and to sympathize in your sufferings," added the Count, with an air of solemnity, "for I have known what it is to love, and to lament the object of my love. Yes," continued he, while his eyes filled with tears, "I have suffered!—but those times have passed away—long passed! and I can now look back upon them without emotion."

"My dear sir," said Emily, timidly, "what mean those tears?—they speak, I fear, another language—they plead for me."

"They are weak tears, for they are useless ones," replied the Count, drying them, "I would have you superior to such weakness. These, however, are only faint traces of a grief, which, if it had not been opposed by long continued effort, might have led me to the verge of madness! Judge, then, whether I have not cause to warn you
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of an indulgence, which may produce so terrible an effect, and which must certainly, if not opposed, overcloud the years, that otherwise might be happy. M. Du Pont is a sensible and amiable man, who has long been tenderly attached to you; his family and fortune are unexceptionable;—after what I have said, it is unnecessary to add, that I should rejoice in your felicity, and that I think M. Du Pont would promote it. Do not weep, Emily,” continued the Count, taking her hand, “there is happiness reserved for you.”

He was silent a moment; and then added, in a firmer voice, “I do not wish, that you should make a violent effort to overcome your feelings; all I, at present, ask, is, that you will check the thoughts, that would lead you to a remembrance of the past; that you will suffer your mind to be engaged by present objects; that you will allow yourself to believe it possible you may yet be happy; and that you will sometimes think with complacency of poor Du Pont,

Pont, and not condemn him to the state of despondency, from which, my dear Emily, I am endeavouring to withdraw you."

"Ah! my dear sir," said Emily, while her tears still fell, "do not suffer the benevolence of your wishes to mislead Mons. Du Pont with an expectation that I can ever accept his hand. If I understand my own heart, this never can be; your instruction I can obey in almost every other particular, than that of adopting a contrary belief."

"Leave me to understand your heart," replied the Count, with a faint smile. "If you pay me the compliment to be guided by my advice in other instances, I will pardon your incredulity, respecting your future conduct towards Mons. Du Pont. I will not even press you to remain longer at the chateau than your own satisfaction will permit; but though I forbear to oppose your present retirement, I shall urge the claims of friendship for your future visits."

Tears of gratitude mingled with those of tender regret, while Emily thanked the
Count

Count for the many instances of friendship she had received from him ; promised to be directed by his advice upon every subject but one, and assured him of the pleasure, with which she should, at some future period, accept the invitation of the Countess and himself—if Mons. Du Pont was not at the chateau.

The Count smiled at this condition. “ Be it so,” said he, “ meanwhile the convent is so near the chateau, that my daughter and I shall often visit you ; and if, sometimes, we should dare to bring you another visitor—will you forgive us ?”

Emily looked distressed, and remained silent.

“ Well,” rejoined the Count, “ I will pursue this subject no further, and must now entreat your forgiveness for having pressed it thus far. You will, however, do me the justice to believe, that I have been urged only by a sincere regard for your happiness, and that of my amiable friend Mons. Du Pont.

Emily, when she left the Count, went to mention her intended departure to the Countess, who opposed it with polite expressions of regret ; after which, she sent a note to acquaint the lady abbess, that she should return to the convent ; and thither she withdrew on the evening of the following day. M. Du Pont, in extreme regret, saw her depart, while the Count endeavoured to cheer him with a hope, that Emily would sometimes regard him with a more favourable eye.

She was pleased to find herself once more in the tranquil retirement of the convent, where she experienced a renewal of all the maternal kindness of the abbess, and of the sisterly attentions of the nuns. A report of the late extraordinary occurrence at the chateau had already reached them, and, after supper, on the evening of her arrival, it was the subject of conversation in the convent parlour, where she was requested to mention some particulars of that unaccountable event. Emily was guarded in her conversation,

sation on this subject, and briefly related a few circumstances concerning Ludovico, whose disappearance, her auditors almost unanimously agreed, had been effected by supernatural means.

“A belief had so long prevailed,” said a nun, who was called sister Frances, “that the chateau was haunted, that I was surprised, when I heard the Count had the temerity to inhabit it. Its former possessor, I fear, had some deed of conscience to atone for; let us hope that the virtues of its present owner will preserve him from the punishment due to the errors of the last, if, indeed, he was criminal.”

“Of what crime, then, was he suspected?” said a Mademoiselle Feydeau, a boarder at the convent.

“Let us pray for his soul!” said a nun, who had till now sat in silent attention. “If he was criminal, his punishment in this world was sufficient.”

There was a mixture of wildness and solemnity in her manner of delivering this,

which struck Emily exceedingly ; but Mademoiselle repeated her question, without noticing the solemn eagerness of the nun.

“ I dare not presume to say what was his crime,” replied sister Frances ; “ but I have heard many reports of an extraordinary nature, respecting the late Marquis de Villeroi, and among others, that, soon after the death of his lady, he quitted Chateau-le-Blanc, and never afterwards returned to it. I was not here at the time, so I can only mention it from report, and so many years have passed since the Marchioness died, that few of our sisterhood, I believe, can do more.”

“ But I can,” said the nun, who had before spoken, and whom they called sister Agnes.

“ You then,” said Mademoiselle Feydeau, “ are possibly acquainted with circumstances, that enable you to judge, whether he was criminal or not, and what was the crime imputed to him.”

“ I am,” replied the nun ; “ but who shall dare to scrutinize my thoughts—who shall

shall dare to pluck out my opinion? God only is his judge, and to that judge he is gone!"

Emily looked with surprise at sister Frances, who returned her a significant glance.

"I only requested your opinion," said Mademoiselle Feydeau, mildly; "if the subject is displeasing to you, I will drop it."

"Displeasing!"—said the nun, with emphasis.—"We are idle talkers; we do not weigh the meaning of the words we use; *displeasing* is a poor word. I will go pray." As she said this she rose from her seat, and with a profound sigh quitted the room.

"What can be the meaning of this?" said Emily, when she was gone.

"It is nothing extraordinary," replied sister Frances, "she is often thus; but she has no meaning in what she says. Her intellects are at times deranged. Did you never see her thus before?"

"Never," said Emily. "I have, indeed, sometimes, thought, that there was the me-

lancholy of madness in her look, but never before perceived it in her speech. Poor soul, I will pray for her!"

"Your prayers then, my daughter, will unite with ours," observed the lady abbess, "she has need of them."

"Dear lady," said Mademoiselle Feydeau, addressing the abbess, "what is your opinion of the late Marquis? The strange circumstances, that have occurred at the chateau, have so much awakened my curiosity, that I shall be pardoned the question. What was his imputed crime, and what the punishment, to which sister Agnes alluded?"

"We must be cautious of advancing our opinion," said the abbess, with an air of reserve, mingled with solemnity, "we must be cautious of advancing our opinion on so delicate a subject. I will not take upon me to pronounce, that the late Marquis was criminal, or to say what was the crime of which he was suspected; but, concerning the punishment our daughter Agnes hinted,
I know

I know of none he suffered. She probably alluded to the severe one, which an exasperated conscience can inflict. Beware, my children, of incurring so terrible a punishment—it is the purgatory of this life! The late Marchioness I knew well; she was a pattern to such as live in the world; nay, our sacred order need not have blushed to copy her virtues! Our holy convent received her mortal part; her heavenly spirit, I doubt not, ascended to its sanctuary!”

As the abbess spoke this, the last bell of vespers struck up, and she rose. “Let us go, my children,” said she, “and intercede for the wretched; let us go and confess our sins, and endeavour to purify our souls for the heaven to which *she* is gone!”

Emily was affected by the solemnity of this exhortation, and, remembering her father, “The heaven, to which *he*, too, is gone!” said she, faintly, as she suppressed her sighs, and followed the abbess and the nuns to the chapel.

C H A P. VIII.

“ Be thou a spirit of health, or goblin damn’d,
 Bring with thee airs from heaven, or blasts from hell,
 Be thy intents wicked, or charitable,

 I will speak to thee.”

HAMLET.

COUNT DE VILLEFORT, at length, received a letter from the advocate at Avignon, encouraging Emily to assert her claim to the estates of the late Madame Montoni; and, about the same time, a messenger arrived from Monsieur Quésnel with intelligence, that made an appeal to the law on this subject unnecessary, since it appeared, that the only person, who could have opposed her claim, was now no more. A friend of M. Quésnel, who resided at Venice, had sent him an account of the death of Montoni, who had been brought to trial with Orsino, as his supposed accomplice in the murder of the Venetian nobleman. Orsino was found

found guilty, condemned and executed upon the wheel, but, nothing being discovered to criminate Montoni, and his colleagues, on this charge, they were all released, except Montoni, who, being considered by the senate as a very dangerous person, was, for other reasons, ordered again into confinement, where, it was said, he had died in a doubtful and mysterious manner, and not without suspicion of having been poisoned. The authority, from which M. Quesnel had received this information, would not allow him to doubt its truth, and he told Emily, that she had now only to lay claim to the estates of her late aunt, to secure them, and added, that he would himself assist in the necessary forms of this business. The term, for which La Vallée had been let, being now also nearly expired, he acquainted her with the circumstance, and advised her to take the road thither, through Tholouse, where he promised to meet her, and where it would be proper for her to take possession of the estates of the late Madame Mon-

toni; adding, that he would spare her any difficulties, that might occur on that occasion from the want of knowledge on the subject, and that he believed it would be necessary for her to be at Tholouse, in about three weeks from the present time.

An increase of fortune seemed to have awakened this sudden kindness in M. Questnel towards his niece, and it appeared, that he entertained more respect for the rich heiress, than he had ever felt compassion for the poor and unfriended orphan.

The pleasure, with which she received this intelligence, was clouded when she considered, that he, for whose sake she had once regretted the want of fortune, was no longer worthy of sharing it with her; but, remembering the friendly admonition of the Count, she checked this melancholy reflection, and endeavoured to feel only gratitude for the unexpected good, that now attended her; while it formed no inconsiderable part of her satisfaction to know, that La Vallée, her native home, which was endeared to her by its
 having

having been the residence of her parents, would soon be restored to her possession. There she meant to fix her future residence, for, though it could not be compared with the chateau at Tholouse, either for extent, or magnificence, its pleasant scenes, and the tender remembrances that haunted them, had claims upon her heart, which she was not inclined to sacrifice to ostentation. She wrote immediately to thank M. Quesnel for the active interest he took in her concerns, and to say that she would meet him at Tholouse at the appointed time.

When Count de Villefort, with Blanche, came to the convent to give Emily the advice of the advocate, he was informed of the contents of M. Quesnel's letter, and gave her his sincere congratulations on the occasion; but she observed, that, when the first expression of satisfaction had faded from his countenance, an unusual gravity succeeded, and she scarcely hesitated to enquire its cause.

“It has no new occasion,” replied the

H 5

Count;

Count; " I am harassed and perplexed by the confusion into which my family is thrown by their foolish superstition. Idle reports are floating round me, which I can neither admit to be true, or prove to be false; and I am, also, very anxious about the poor fellow, Ludovico, concerning whom I have not been able to obtain information. Every part of the chateau, and every part of the neighbourhood, too, has, I believe, been searched, and I know not what further can be done, since I have already offered large rewards for the discovery of him. The keys of the north apartment I have not suffered to be out of my possession, since he disappeared, and I mean to watch in those chambers, myself, this very night."

Emily, seriously alarmed for the Count, united her entreaties with those of the Lady Blanche, to dissuade him from his purpose.

"What should I fear?" said he. "I have no faith in supernatural combats, and for human opposition I shall be prepared;
nay,

nay, I will even promise not to watch alone."

"But who, dear sir, will have courage enough to watch with you?" said Emily.

"My son," replied the Count. "If I am not carried off in the night," added he, smiling, "you shall hear the result of my adventure, to-morrow."

The Count and Lady Blanche, shortly afterwards, took leave of Emily, and returned to the chateau, where he informed Henri of his intention, who, not without some secret reluctance, consented to be the partner of his watch; and, when the design was mentioned after supper, the Countess was terrified, and the Baron, and M. Du Pont joined with her in entreating, that he would not tempt his fate, as Ludovico had done. "We know not," added the Baron, "the nature, or the power of an evil spirit; and that such a spirit haunts those chambers can now, I think, scarcely be doubted. Beware, my lord, how you provoke its vengeance, since it has already

given us one terrible example of its malice. I allow it may be probable, that the spirits of the dead are permitted to return to the earth only on occasions of high import; but the present import may be your destruction."

The Count could not forbear smiling; "Do you think then, Baron," said he, "that my destruction is of sufficient importance to draw back to earth the soul of the departed? Alas! my good friend, there is no occasion for such means to accomplish the destruction of any individual. Wherever the mystery rests, I trust I shall, this night, be able to detect it. You know I am not superstitious,"

"I know that you are incredulous," interrupted the Baron.

"Well, call it what you will, I meant to say, that, though you know I am free from superstition—if any thing supernatural has appeared, I doubt not it will appear to me, and if any strange event hangs over my house, or if any extraordinary transaction
has

has formerly been connected with it, I shall probably be made acquainted with it. At all events I will invite discovery ; and, that I may be equal to a mortal attack, which in good truth, my friend, is what I most expect, I shall take care to be well armed."

The Count took leave of his family, for the night, with an assumed gaiety, which but ill concealed the anxiety that depressed his spirits, and retired to the north apartments, accompanied by his son, and followed by the Baron, M. Du Pont and some of the domestics, who all bade him good night at the outer door. In these chambers every thing appeared as when he had last been here ; even in the bed-room no alteration was visible, where he lighted his own fire, for none of the domestics could be prevailed upon to venture thither. After carefully examining the chamber and the oriel, the Count and Henri drew their chairs upon the hearth, set a bottle of wine and a lamp before them, laid their swords upon the table, and, stirring the wood into a blaze, began to converse

verse on indifferent topics. But Henri was often silent and abstracted, and sometimes threw a glance of mingled awe and curiosity round the gloomy apartment; while the Count gradually ceased to converse, and sat either lost in thought, or reading a volume of Tacitus, which he had brought to beguile the tediousness of the night.

C H A P. IX.

“ Give thy thoughts no tongue.”

SHAKESPEARE.

THE Baron St. Foix, whom anxiety for his friend had kept awake, rose early to enquire the event of the night, when, as he passed the Count's closet, hearing steps within, he knocked at the door, and it was opened by his friend himself. Rejoicing to see him in safety, and curious to learn the occurrences of the night, he had not immediately leisure to observe the unusual gravity that overspread the features of the Count, whose reserved answers first occasioned him to notice it. The Count, then smiling, endeavoured to treat the subject of his curiosity with levity; but the Baron was serious, and pursued his enquiries so closely, that the Count, at length, resuming his gravity, said, “ Well, my friend, press the subject no further, I entreat you; and let me request

quest also, that you will hereafter be silent upon any thing you may think extraordinary in my future conduct. I do not scruple to tell you, that I am unhappy, and that the watch of the last night has not assisted me to discover Ludovico; upon every occurrence of the night you must excuse my reserve."

"But where is Henri?" said the Baron, with surprise and disappointment at this denial.

"He is well in his own apartment," replied the Count. "You will not question him on this topic, my friend, since you know my wish."

"Certainly not," said the Baron, somewhat chagrined, "since it would be displeasing to you; but methinks, my friend, you might rely on my discretion, and drop this unusual reserve. However, you must allow me to suspect, that you have seen reason to become a convert to my system, and are no longer the incredulous knight you lately appeared to be."

"Let

“ Let us talk no more upon this subject,” said the Count ; “ you may be assured, that no ordinary circumstance has imposed this silence upon me towards a friend, whom I have called so for near thirty years ; and my present reserve cannot make you question either my esteem, or the sincerity of my friendship.”

“ I will not doubt either,” said the Baron, “ though you must allow me to express my surprise, at this silence.”

“ To me I will allow it,” replied the Count, “ but I earnestly entreat that you will forbear to notice it to my family, as well as every thing remarkable you may observe in my conduct towards them.”

The Baron readily promised this, and, after conversing for some time on general topics, they descended to the breakfast-room, where the Count met his family with a cheerful countenance, and evaded their enquiries by employing light ridicule, and assuming an air of uncommon gaiety, while he assured them, that they need not apprehend

hend any thing from the north chambers, since Henri and himself had been permitted to return from them in safety.

Henri, however, was less successful in disguising his feelings. From his countenance an expression of terror was not entirely faded; he was often silent and thoughtful, and, when he attempted to laugh at the eager enquiries of Mademoiselle Bearn, it was evidently only an attempt.

In the evening, the Count called, as he had promised, at the convent, and Emily was surprised to perceive a mixture of playful ridicule and of reserve in his mention of the north apartment. Of what had occurred there, however, he said nothing, and, when she ventured to remind him of his promise to tell her the result of his enquiries, and to ask if he had received any proof that those chambers were haunted, his look became solemn, for a moment, then, seeming to recollect himself, he smiled, and said, "My dear Emily, do not suffer my lady abbess to infect your good understanding with

with these fancies; she will teach you to expect a ghost in every dark room. But believe me," added he, with a profound sigh, "the apparition of the dead comes not on light, or sportive errands, to terrify, or to surprise the timid." He paused, and fell into a momentary thoughtfulness, and then added, "We will say no more on this subject."

Soon after, he took leave, and, when Emily joined some of the nuns, she was surprised to find them acquainted with a circumstance, which she had carefully avoided to mention, and expressing their admiration of his intrepidity in having dared to pass a night in the apartment, whence Ludovico had disappeared; for she had not considered with what rapidity a tale of wonder circulates. The nuns had acquired their information from peasants, who brought fruit to the monastery, and whose whole attention had been fixed, since the disappearance of Ludovico, on what was passing in the castle.

Emily

Emily listened in silence to the various opinions of the nuns, concerning the conduct of the Count, most of whom condemned it as rash and presumptuous, affirming, that it was provoking the vengeance of an evil spirit, thus to intrude upon its haunts.

Sister Frances contended, that the Count had acted with the bravery of a virtuous mind. He knew himself guiltless of aught that should provoke a good spirit, and did not fear the spells of an evil one, since he could claim the protection of an higher Power, of Him, who can command the wicked, and will protect the innocent.

“ The guilty cannot claim that protection !” said sister Agnes, “ let the Count look to his conduct, that he do not forfeit his claim ! Yet who is he, that shall dare to call himself innocent !—all earthly innocence is but comparative. Yet still how wide asunder are the extremes of guilt, and to what an horrible depth may we fall ! Oh !——”

The nun, as she concluded, uttered a shuddering

shuddering sigh, that startled Emily, who, looking up, perceived the eyes of Agnes fixed on hers; after which the sister rose, took her hand, gazed earnestly upon her countenance, for some moments, in silence, and then said,

“ You are young—you are innocent! I mean you are yet innocent of any great crime!—But you have passions in your heart,—scorpions; they sleep now—beware how you awaken them!—they will sting you, even unto death!”

Emily, affected by these words, and by the solemnity with which they were delivered, could not suppress her tears.

“ Ah! is it so?” exclaimed Agnes, her countenance softening from its sternness—
 “ so young, and so unfortunate! We are sisters, then, indeed. Yet, there is no bond of kindness among the guilty,” she added, while her eyes resumed their wild expression, “ no gentleness,—no peace, no hope! I knew them all once—my eyes could weep—but now they burn, for now, my
 soul

soul is fixed, and fearless!—I lament no more!”

“Rather let us repent and pray,” said another nun. “We are taught to hope, that prayer and penitence will work our salvation. There is hope for all who repent!”

“Who repent and turn to the true faith,” observed sister Frances.

“For all but me!” replied Agnes solemnly, who paused, and then abruptly added, “My head burns, I believe I am not well. O! could I strike from my memory all former scenes—the figures, that rise up, like furies, to torment me!—I see them, when I sleep, and, when I am awake, they are still before my eyes! I see them now—now!”

She stood in a fixed attitude of horror, her straining eyes moving slowly round the room, as if they followed something. One of the nuns gently took her hand, to lead her from the parlour. Agnes became calm, drew her other hand across her eyes, looked
2 again,

again, and, sighing deeply, said, " They are gone—they are gone ! I am feverish, I know not what I say. I am thus, sometimes, but it will go off again, I shall soon be better. Was not that the vesper-bell ?"

" No," replied Frances, " the evening service is passed. Let Margaret lead you to your cell."

" You are right," replied sister Agnes, " I shall be better there. Good night, my sisters ; remember me in your orisons !"

When they had withdrawn, Frances, observing Emily's emotion, said, " Do not be alarmed, our sister is often thus deranged, though I have not lately seen her so frantic ; her usual mood is melancholy. This fit has been coming on for several days ; seclusion and the customary treatment will restore her."

" But how rationally she conversed, at first !" observed Emily, " her ideas followed each other in perfect order."

" Yes," replied the nun, " this is nothing

thing new : nay, I have sometimes known her argue not only with method, but with acuteness, and then, in a moment, start off into madness."

" Her conscience seems afflicted," said Emily, " did you ever hear what circumstance reduced her to this deplorable condition ?"

" I have," replied the nun, who said no more till Emily repeated the question, when she added in a low voice, and looking significantly towards the other boarders, " I cannot tell you now, but, if you think it worth your while, come to my cell to-night, when our sisterhood are at rest, and you shall hear more ; but remember we rise to midnight prayers, and come either before, or after midnight."

Emily promised to remember, and, the abbess soon after appearing, they spoke no more of the unhappy nun.

The Count, meanwhile, on his return home, had found M. Du Pont in one of those fits of despondency, which his attachment

ment to Emily frequently occasioned him, an attachment, that had subsisted too long to be easily subdued, and which had already outlived the opposition of his friends. M. Du Pont had first seen Emily in Gascony, during the lifetime of his parent, who, on discovering his son's partiality for mademoiselle St. Aubert, his inferior in point of fortune, forbade him to declare it to her family, or to think of her more. During the life of his father, he had observed the first command, but had found it impracticable to obey the second, and had, sometimes, soothed his passion by visiting her favourite haunts, among which was the fishing-house, where, once or twice, he addressed her in verse, concealing his name, in obedience to the promise he had given his father. There too he played the pathetic air, to which she had listened with such surprise and admiration; and there he found the miniature, that had since cherished a passion fatal to his repose. During this expedition into Italy, his

father died ; but he received his liberty at a moment, when he was the least enabled to profit by it, since the object, that rendered it most valuable, was no longer within the reach of his vows. By what accident he discovered Emily, and assisted to release her from a terrible imprisonment, has already appeared, and also the unavailing hope, with which he then encouraged his love, and the fruitless efforts, that he had since made to overcome it.

The Count still endeavoured, with friendly zeal, to sooth him with a belief, that patience, perseverance and prudence would finally obtain for him happiness and Emily : “ Time,” said he, “ will wear away the melancholy impression, which disappointment has left on her mind, and she will be sensible of your merit. Your services have already awakened her gratitude, and your sufferings her pity ; and trust me, my friend, in a heart so sensible as hers, gratitude and pity lead to love. When her
imagination

imagination is rescued from its present delusion, she will readily accept the homage of a mind like yours."

Du Pont sighed, while he listened to these words; and, endeavouring to hope what his friend believed, he willingly yielded to an invitation to prolong his visit at the chateau, which we now leave for the monastery of St. Claire.

When the nuns had retired to rest, Emily stole to her appointment with sister Frances, whom she found in her cell, engaged in prayer, before a little table, where appeared the image she was addressing, and, above, the dim lamp, that gave light to the place. Turning her eyes, as the door opened, she beckoned to Emily to come in, who, having done so, seated herself in silence beside the nun's little mattress of straw, till her orisons should conclude. The latter soon rose from her knees, and, taking down the lamp and placing it on the table, Emily perceived there a human scull and bones, lying beside an hour-glass; but the nun, without observing

her emotion, sat down on the mattress by her, saying, "Your curiosity, sister, has made you punctual, but you have nothing remarkable to hear in the history of poor Agnes, of whom I avoided to speak in the presence of my lay-sisters, only because I would not publish her crime to them."

"I shall consider your confidence in me as a favour," said Emily, "and will not misuse it."

"Sister Agnes," resumed the nun, "is of a noble family, as the dignity of her air must already have informed you, but I will not dishonour their name so much as to reveal it. Love was the occasion of her crime and of her madness. She was beloved by a gentleman of inferior fortune, and her father, as I have heard, bestowing her on a nobleman, whom she disliked, an ill-governed passion proved her destruction.—Every obligation of virtue and of duty was forgotten, and she prophaned her marriage vows; but her guilt was soon detected, and she would have fallen a sacrifice to the vengeance

geance of her husband, had not her father contrived to convey her from his power. By what means he did this, I never could learn; but he secreted her in this convent, where he afterwards prevailed with her to take the veil, while a report was circulated in the world, that she was dead, and the father, to save his daughter, assisted the rumour, and employed such means as induced her husband to believe she had become a victim to his jealousy. You look surprised," added the nun, observing Emily's countenance; "I allow the story is uncommon, but not, I believe, without a parallel."

"Pray proceed," said Emily, "I am interested."

"The story is already told," resumed the nun, "I have only to mention, that the long struggle, which Agnes suffered, between love, remorse and a sense of the duties she had taken upon herself in becoming of our order, at length unsettled her reason. At first, she was frantic and melancholy by quick alternatives; then, she sunk into a

deep and settled melancholy, which still, however, has, at times, been interrupted by fits of wildness, and, of late, these have again been frequent."

Emily was affected by the history of the sister, some parts of whose story brought to her remembrance that of the Marchioness de Villeroi, who had also been compelled by her father to forsake the object of her affections, for a nobleman of his choice; but, from what Dorothee had related, there appeared no reason to suppose, that she had escaped the vengeance of a jealous husband, or to doubt for a moment the innocence of her conduct. But Emily, while she sighed over the misery of the nun, could not forbear shedding a few tears to the misfortunes of the Marchioness; and, when she returned to the mention of sister Agnes, she asked Frances if she remembered her in her youth, and whether she was then beautiful.

"I was not here at the time, when she took the vows," replied Frances, "which is so long ago, that few of the present sisterhood,

hood, I believe, were witnesses of the ceremony; nay, even our lady mother did not then preside over the convent: but I can remember, when sister Agnes was a very beautiful woman. She retains that air of high rank, which always distinguished her, but her beauty, you must perceive, is fled; I can scarcely discover even a vestige of the loveliness, that once animated her features."

"It is strange," said Emily, "but there are moments, when her countenance has appeared familiar to my memory! You will think me fanciful, and I think myself so, for I certainly never saw sister Agnes, before I came to this convent, and I must, therefore, have seen some person, whom she strongly resembles, though of this I have no recollection."

"You have been interested by the deep melancholy of her countenance," said Frances, "and its impression has probably deluded your imagination; for I might as reasonably think I perceive a likeness between you and Agnes, as you, that you have seen

her any where but in this convent, since this has been her place of refuge, for nearly as many years as make your age."

"Indeed!" said Emily.

"Yes," rejoined Frances, "and why does that circumstance excite your surprise?"

Emily did not appear to notice this question, but remained thoughtful, for a few moments, and then said, "It was about that same period that the Marchioness de Villeroi expired."

"That is an odd remark," said Frances.

Emily, recalled from her reverie, smiled, and gave the conversation another turn, but it soon came back to the subject of the unhappy nun, and Emily remained in the cell of sister Frances, till the mid-night bell aroused her; when, apologizing for having interrupted the sister's repose, till this late hour, they quitted the cell together. Emily returned to her chamber, and the nun, bearing a glimmering taper, went to her devotion in the chapel.

Several

Several days followed, during which Emily saw neither the Count, or any of his family ; and, when, at length, he appeared, she remarked, with concern, that his air was unusually disturbed.

“ My spirits are harassed,” said he, in answer to her anxious enquiries, “ and I mean to change my residence, for a little while, an experiment, which, I hope, will restore my mind to its usual tranquillity. My daughter and myself will accompany the Baron St. Foix to his chateau. It lies in a valley of the Pyrenées, that opens towards Gascony, and I have been thinking, Emily, that when you set out for La Vallée, we may go part of the way together ; it would be a satisfaction to me to guard you towards your home.”

She thanked the Count for his friendly consideration, and lamented, that the necessity for her going first to Tholouse would render this plan impracticable. “ But, when you are at the Baron’s residence,” she added, “ you will be only a short journey from La

Vallée, and I think, sir, you will not leave the country without visiting me; it is unnecessary to say with what pleasure I should receive you and the Lady Blanche."

"I do not doubt it," replied the Count, "and I will not deny myself and Blanche the pleasure of visiting you, if your affairs should allow you to be at La Vallée, about the time when we can meet you there."

When Emily said that she should hope to see the Countess also, she was not sorry to learn that this lady was going, accompanied by Mademoiselle Bearn, to pay a visit, for a few weeks, to a family in lower Languedoc.

The Count, after some further conversation on his intended journey and on the arrangement of Emily's, took leave; and many days did not succeed this visit, before a second letter from M. Quésnel informed her, that he was then at Tholouse, that La Vallée was at liberty, and that he wished her to set off for the former place, where he awaited her arrival, with all possible dispatch, since his own affairs pressed him to return

return to Gascony. Emily did not hesitate to obey him, and, having taken an affecting leave of the Count's family, in which M. Du Pont was still included, and of her friends at the convent, she set out for Thoulouse, attended by the unhappy Annette, and guarded by a steady servant of the Count.

C H A P. X.

“ Lull’d in the countless chambers of the brain,
 Our thoughts are link’d by many a hidden chain :
 Awake but one, and lo ! what myriads rise !
 Each stamps its image as the other flies !”

PLEASURES OF MEMORY.

EMILY pursued her journey, without any accident, along the plains of Languedoc towards the north-west ; and, on this her return to Tholouse, which she had last left with Madame Montoni, she thought much on the melancholy fate of her aunt, who, but for her own imprudence, might now have been living in happiness there ! Montoni, too, often rose to her fancy, such as she had seen him in his days of triumph, bold, spirited and commanding ; such also as she had since beheld him in his days of vengeance ; and now, only a few short months had passed—and he had no longer the power, or the will to afflict ;—he had become

become a clod of earth, and his life was vanished like a shadow! Emily could have wept at his fate, had she not remembered his crimes; for that of her unfortunate aunt she did weep, and all sense of her errors was overcome by the recollection of her misfortunes.

Other thoughts and other emotions succeeded, as Emily drew near the well-known scenes of her early love, and considered, that Valancourt was lost to her and to himself, for ever. At length, she came to the brow of the hill, whence, on her departure for Italy, she had given a farewell look to this beloved landscape, amongst whose woods and fields she had so often walked with Valancourt, and where he was then to inhabit, when she would be far, far away! She saw, once more, that chain of the Pyrenées, which overlooked La Vallée, rising, like faint clouds, on the horizon. “There, too, is Gascony, extended at their feet!” said she, “O my father,—my mother! And there too, is the Garonne!” she added, drying the

the tears, that obscured her sight,—“ and Tholouse, and my aunt’s mansion—and the groves in her garden !—O my friends ! are ye all lost to me—must I never, never see ye more !” Tears rushed again to her eyes, and she continued to weep, till an abrupt turn in the road had nearly occasioned the carriage to overset, when, looking up, she perceived another part of the well-known scene around Tholouse, and all the reflections and anticipations, which she had suffered, at the moment, when she bade it last adieu, came with recollected force to her heart. She remembered how anxiously she had looked forward to the futurity, which was to decide her happiness concerning Valancourt, and what depressing fears had assailed her ; the very words she had uttered, as she withdrew her last look from the prospect, came to her memory. “ Could I but be certain,” she had then said, “ that I should ever return, and that Valancourt would still live for me—I should go in peace !”

Now

Now, that futurity, so anxiously anticipated, was arrived, she was returned—but what a dreary blank appeared!—Valancourt no longer lived for her! She had no longer even the melancholy satisfaction of contemplating his image in her heart, for he was no longer the same Valancourt she had cherished there—the solace of many a mournful hour, the animating friend, that had enabled her to bear up against the oppression of Montoni—the distant hope, that had beamed over her gloomy prospect! On perceiving this beloved idea to be an illusion of her own creation, Valancourt seemed to be annihilated, and her soul sickened at the blank, that remained. His marriage with a rival, even his death, she thought she could have endured with more fortitude, than this discovery; for then, amidst all her grief, she could have looked in secret upon the image of goodness, which her fancy had drawn of him, and comfort would have mingled with her suffering!

Drying her tears, she looked, once more,
upon

upon the landscape, which had excited them, and perceived, that she was passing the very bank, where she had taken leave of Valancourt, on the morning of her departure from Tholouse, and she now saw him, through her returning tears, such as he had appeared, when she looked from the carriage to give him a last adieu—saw him leaning mournfully against the high trees, and remembered the fixed look of mingled tenderness and anguish, with which he had then regarded her. This recollection was too much for her heart, and she sunk back in the carriage, nor once looked up, till it stopped at the gates of what was now her own mansion.

These being opened, and by the servant, to whose care the chateau had been entrusted, the carriage drove into the court, where, alighting, she hastily passed through the great hall, now silent and solitary, to a large oak parlour, the common sitting room of the late Madame Montoni, where, instead of being received by M. Quesnel, she found a letter from him, informing her, that business of

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consequence had obliged him to leave Thoulouse two days before. Emily was, upon the whole, not sorry to be spared his presence, since his abrupt departure appeared to indicate the same indifference, with which he had formerly regarded her. This letter informed her, also, of the progress he had made in the settlement of her affairs, and concluded with directions, concerning the forms of some business, which remained for her to transact. But M. Quesnel's unkindness did not long occupy her thoughts, which returned to the remembrance of the persons she had been accustomed to see in this mansion, and chiefly of the ill-guided and unfortunate Madame Montoni. In the room, where she now sat, she had breakfasted with her on the morning of their departure for Italy; and the view of it brought most forcibly to her recollection all she had herself suffered, at that time, and the many gay expectations, which her aunt had formed, respecting the journey before her. While Emily's mind was thus engaged, her eyes wandered

wandered unconsciously to a large window, that looked upon the garden, and here new memorials of the past spoke to her heart, for she saw extended before her the very avenue, in which she had parted with Valancourt, on the eve of her journey; and all the anxiety, the tender interest he had shewn concerning her future happiness, his earnest remonstrances against her committing herself to the power of Montoni, and the truth of his affection, came afresh to her memory. At this moment, it appeared almost impossible, that Valancourt could have become unworthy of her regard, and she doubted all that she had lately heard to his disadvantage, and even his own words, which had confirmed Count de Villefort's report of him. Overcome by the recollections, which the view of this avenue occasioned, she turned abruptly from the window, and sunk into a chair beside it, where she sat, given up to grief, till the entrance of Annette, with coffee, aroused her.

“Dear madam, how melancholy this place
looks

looks now," said Annette, "to what it used to do ! It is dismal coming home, when there is nobody to welcome one !"

This was not the moment, in which Emily could bear the remark ; her tears fell again, and, as soon as she had taken the coffee, she retired to her apartment, where she endeavoured to repose her fatigued spirits. But busy memory would still supply her with the visions of former times : she saw Valancourt interesting and benevolent, as he had been wont to appear in the days of their early love, and, amidst the scenes, where she had believed that they should sometimes pass their years together !—but, at length, sleep closed these afflicting scenes from her view.

On the following morning, serious occupation recovered her from such melancholy reflections ; for, being desirous of quitting Tholouse, and of hastening on to La Vallée, she made some enquiries into the condition of the estate, and immediately dispatched a part of the necessary business concerning

concerning it, according to the directions of Mons. Quesnel. It required a strong effort to abstract her thoughts from other interests sufficiently to attend to this, but she was rewarded for her exertions by again experiencing, that employment is the surest antidote to sorrow.

This day was devoted entirely to business; and, among other concerns, she employed means to learn the situation of all her poor tenants, that she might relieve their wants, or confirm their comforts.

In the evening, her spirits were so much strengthened, that she thought she could bear to visit the gardens, where she had so often walked with Valancourt; and, knowing, that, if she delayed to do so, their scenes would only affect her the more, whenever they should be viewed, she took advantage of the present state of her mind, and entered them.

Passing hastily the gate leading from the court into the gardens, she hurried up the great avenue, scarcely permitting her memory

mory to dwell for a moment on the circumstance of her having here parted with Valancourt, and soon quitted this for other walks less interesting to her heart. These brought her, at length, to the flight of steps, that led from the lower garden to the terrace, on seeing which, she became agitated, and hesitated whether to ascend, but, her resolution returning, she proceeded.

“ Ah !” said Emily, as she ascended, “ these are the same high trees, that used to wave over the terrace, and these the same flowery thickets—the liburnum, the wild rose, and the cerinthe—which were wont to grow beneath them ! Ah ! and there, too, on that bank, are the very plants, which Valancourt so carefully reared !—O when last I saw them !”—She checked the thought, but could not restrain her tears, and, after walking slowly on for a few moments, her agitation, upon the view of this well-known scene, increased so much, that she was obliged to stop, and lean upon the wall of the terrace. It was a mild, and beautiful evening.

The

The sun was setting over the extensive landscape, to which his beams, sloping from beneath a dark cloud, that overhung the west, gave rich and partial colouring, and touched the tufted summits of the groves, that rose from the garden below, with a yellow gleam. Emily and Valancourt had often admired together this scene, at the same hour; and it was exactly on this spot, that, on the night preceding her departure for Italy, she had listened to his remonstrances against the journey, and to the pleadings of passionate affection. Some observations, which she made on the landscape, brought this to her remembrance, and with it all the minute particulars of that conversation;—the alarming doubts he had expressed concerning Montoni, doubts, which had since been fatally confirmed; the reasons and entreaties he had employed to prevail with her to consent to an immediate marriage; the tenderness of his love, the paroxysms of his grief, and the conviction he had repeatedly expressed, that they should
never

never meet again in happiness ! All these circumstances rose afresh to her mind, and awakened the various emotions she had then suffered. Her tenderness for Valancourt became as powerful as in the moments, when she thought, that she was parting with him and happiness together, and when the strength of her mind had enabled her to triumph over present suffering, rather than to deserve the reproach of her conscience by engaging in a clandestine marriage. —“ Alas !” said Emily, as these recollections came to her mind, “ and what have I gained by the fortitude I then practised ?—am I happy now ?—He said, we should meet no more in happiness ; but, O ! he little thought his own misconduct would separate us, and lead to the very evil he then dreaded !”

Her reflections increased her anguish, while she was compelled to acknowledge, that the fortitude she had formerly exerted, if it had not conducted her to happiness, had saved her from irretrievable misfortune
—from

—from Valancourt himself ! But in these moments she could not congratulate herself on the prudence, that had saved her ; she could only lament, with bitterest anguish, the circumstances, which had conspired to betray Valancourt into a course of life so different from that, which the virtues, the taste, and the pursuits of his early years had promised ; but she still loved him too well to believe, that his heart was even now depraved, though his conduct had been criminal. An observation, which had fallen from M. St. Aubert more than once, now occurred to her. “ This young man,” said he, speaking of Valancourt, “ has never been at Paris ;” a remark, that had surprised her at the time it was uttered, but which she now understood, and she exclaimed sorrowfully, “ O Valancourt ! if such a friend as my father had been with you at Paris—your noble, ingenuous nature would not have fallen !”

The sun was now set, and, recalling her thoughts from their melancholy subject, she

continued her walk; for the pensive shade of twilight was pleasing to her, and the nightingales from the surrounding groves began to answer each other in the long-drawn, plaintive note, which always touched her heart; while all the fragrance of the flowery thickets, that bounded the terrace, was awakened by the cool evening air, which wafted so lightly among their leaves, that they scarcely trembled as it passed.

Emily came, at length, to the steps of the pavilion, that terminated the terrace, and where her last interview with Valancourt, before her departure from Tholouse, had so unexpectedly taken place. The door was now shut, and she trembled, while she hesitated whether to open it; but her wish to see again a place, which had been the chief scene of her former happiness, at length overcoming her reluctance to encounter the painful regret it would renew, she entered. The room was obscured by a melancholy shade; but through the open lattices, darkened by the hanging foliage of

the vines, appeared the dusky landscape, the Garonne reflecting the evening light, and the west still glowing. A chair was placed near one of the balconies, as if some person had been sitting there, but the other furniture of the pavilion remained exactly as usual, and Emily thought it looked as if it had not once been moved since she set out for Italy. The silent and deserted air of the place added solemnity to her emotions, for she heard only the low whisper of the breeze, as it shook the leaves of the vines, and the very faint murmur of the Garonne.

She seated herself in a chair, near the lattice, and yielded to the sadness of her heart, while she recollected the circumstances of her parting interview with Valancourt, on this spot. It was here, too, that she had passed some of the happiest hours of her life with him, when her aunt favoured the connection, for here she had often sat and worked, while he conversed, or read; and she now well remembered with what discriminating

criminating judgment, with what tempered energy, he used to repeat some of the sublimest passages of their favourite authors; how often he would pause to admire with her their excellence, and with what tender delight he would listen to her remarks, and correct her taste.

“ And is it possible,” said Emily, as these recollections returned—“ is it possible, that a mind, so susceptible of whatever is grand or beautiful, could stoop to low pursuits, and be subdued by frivolous temptations?”

She remembered how often she had seen the sudden tear start in his eye, and had heard his voice tremble with emotion, while he related any great or benevolent action, or repeated a sentiment of the same character. “ And such a mind,” said she, “ such a heart, were to be sacrificed to the habits of a great city!”

These recollections becoming too painful to be endured, she abruptly left the pavilion, and, anxious to escape from the me-

morials of her departed happiness, returned towards the chateau. As she passed along the terrace, she perceived a person, walking with a slow step, and a dejected air, under the trees, at some distance. The twilight, which was now deep, would not allow her to distinguish who it was, and she imagined it to be one of the servants, till, the sound of her steps seeming to reach him, he turned half round, and she thought she saw Valancourt!

Whoever it was, he instantly struck among the thickets on the left, and disappeared, while Emily, her eyes fixed on the place, whence he had vanished, and her frame trembling so excessively, that she could scarcely support herself, remained, for some moments, unable to quit the spot, and scarcely conscious of existence. With her recollection, her strength returned, and she hurried towards the house, where she did not venture to enquire who had been in the gardens, lest she should betray her emotion; and she sat down alone, endeavouring

vouring to recollect the figure, air and features of the person she had just seen. Her view of him, however, had been so transient, and the gloom had rendered it so imperfect, that she could remember nothing with exactness; yet the general appearance of his figure, and his abrupt departure, made her still believe, that this person was Valancourt. Sometimes, indeed, she thought, that her fancy, which had been occupied by the idea of him, had suggested his image to her uncertain sight: but this conjecture was fleeting. If it was himself, whom she had seen, she wondered much, that he should be at Thoulouse, and more, how he had gained admittance into the garden; but as often as her impatience prompted her to enquire whether any stranger had been admitted, she was restrained by an unwillingness to betray her doubts; and the evening was passed in anxious conjecture, and in efforts to dismiss the subject from her thoughts. But, these endeavours were

ineffectual, and a thousand inconsistent emotions assailed her, whenever she fancied that Valancourt might be near her; now, she dreaded it to be true, and now she feared it to be false; and, while she constantly tried to persuade herself, that she wished the person, whom she had seen, might not be Valancourt, her heart as constantly contradicted her reason.

The following day was occupied by the visits of several neighbouring families, formerly intimate with Madame Montoni, who came to condole with Emily on her death, to congratulate her upon the acquisition of these estates, and to enquire about Montoni, and concerning the strange reports they had heard of her own situation; all which was done with the utmost decorum, and the visitors departed with as much composure as they had arrived.

Emily was wearied by these formalities, and disgusted by the subservient manners of many persons, who had thought her scarcely
ly

ly worthy of common attention, while she was believed to be a dependant on Madame Montoni.

“ Surely,” said she, “ there is some magic in wealth, which can thus make persons pay their court to it, when it does not even benefit themselves. How strange it is, that a fool or a knave, with riches, should be treated with more respect by the world, than a good man, or a wise man in poverty !”

It was evening, before she was left alone, and she then wished to have refreshed her spirits in the free air of her garden ; but she feared to go thither, lest she should meet again the person, whom she had seen on the preceding night, and he should prove to be Valancourt. The suspense and anxiety she suffered, on this subject, she found all her efforts unable to controul, and her secret wish to see Valancourt once more, though unseen by him, powerfully prompted her to go, but prudence and a delicate

pride restrained her, and she determined to avoid the possibility of throwing herself in his way, by forbearing to visit the gardens, for several days.

When, after near a week, she again ventured thither, she made Annette her companion, and confined her walk to the lower grounds, but often started as the leaves rustled in the breeze, imagining, that some person was among the thickets; and, at the turn of every alley, she looked forward with apprehensive expectation. She pursued her walk thoughtfully and silently, for her agitation would not suffer her to converse with Annette, to whom, however, thought and silence were so intolerable, that she did not scruple at length to talk to her mistress.

“ Dear madam,” said she, “ why do you start so? one would think you knew what has happened.”

“ What has happened ?” said Emily, in a faltering voice, and trying to command her emotion.

“ The

“ The night before last, you know, madam”——

“ I know nothing, Annette,” replied her lady in a more hurried voice.

“ The night before last, madam, there was a robber in the garden.”

“ A robber !” said Emily, in an eager, yet doubting tone.

“ I suppose he was a robber, madam. What else could he be ?”

“ Where did you see him, Annette ?” rejoined Emily, looking round her, and turning back towards the chateau.

“ It was not I that saw him, madam, it was Jean the gardener. It was twelve o'clock at night, and, as he was coming across the court to go the back way into the house, what should he see—but somebody walking in the avenue, that fronts the garden gate ! So, with that, Jean guessed how it was, and he went into the house for his gun.”

“ His gun !” exclaimed Emily.

“ Yes, madam, his gun ; and then he

came out into the court to watch him. Presently, he sees him come slowly down the avenue, and lean over the garden gate, and look up at the house for a long time; and I warrant he examined it well, and settled what window he should break in at."

"But the gun," said Emily—"the gun!"

"Yes, madam, all in good time. Presently, Jean says, the robber opened the gate, and was coming into the court, and then he thought proper to ask him his business: so he called out again, and bade him say who he was, and what he wanted. But the man would do neither; but turned upon his heel, and passed into the garden again. Jean knew then well enough how it was, and so he fired after him."

"Fired!" exclaimed Emily.

"Yes, madam, fired off his gun; but, Holy Virgin! what makes you look so pale, madam? The man was not killed,—I dare say; but if he was, his comrades carried him off: for, when Jean went in the morning,

morning, to look for the body, it was gone, and nothing to be seen but a track of blood on the ground. Jean followed it, that he might find out where the man got into the garden, but it was lost in the grass, and——”

Annette was interrupted: for Emily's spirits died away, and she would have fallen to the ground, if the girl had not caught her, and supported her to a bench, close to them.

When, after a long absence, her senses returned, Emily desired to be led to her apartment: and, though she trembled with anxiety to enquire further on the subject of her alarm, she found herself too ill at present, to dare the intelligence which it was possible she might receive of Valancourt. Having dismissed Annette, that she might weep and think at liberty, she endeavoured to recollect the exact air of the person, whom she had seen on the terrace, and still her fancy gave her the figure of Valancourt. She had, indeed, scarcely a

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doubt,

doubt, that it was he whom she had seen, and at whom the gardener had fired : for the manner of the latter person, as described by Annette, was not that of a robber ; nor did it appear probable, that a robber would have come alone, to break into a house so spacious as this.

When Emily thought herself sufficiently recovered, to listen to what Jean might have to relate, she sent for him ; but he could inform her of no circumstance, that might lead to a knowledge of the person, who had been shot, or of the consequence of the wound ; and, after severely reprimanding him, for having fired with bullets, and ordering diligent enquiry to be made in the neighbourhood for the discovery of the wounded person, she dismissed him, and herself remained in the same state of terrible suspense. All the tenderness she had ever felt for Valancourt, was recalled by the sense of his danger ; and the more she considered the subject, the more her conviction strengthened, that it was he,
who

who had visited the gardens, for the purpose of soothing the misery of disappointed affection, amidst the scenes of his former happiness.

“ Dear madam,” said Annette, when she returned, “ I never saw you so affected before ! I dare say the man is not killed.”

Emily shuddered, and lamented bitterly the rashness of the gardener, in having fired.

“ I knew you would be angry enough about that, madam, or I should have told you before ; and he knew so too ; for, says he, ‘ Annette, say nothing about this to my lady. She lies on the other side of the house, so did not hear the gun, perhaps ; but she would be angry with me, if she knew, seeing there is blood. But then,’ says he, ‘ how is one to keep the garden clear, if one is afraid to fire at a robber, when one sees him ?’ ”

“ No more of this,” said Emily, “ pray leave me.”

Annette obeyed, and Emily returned to
the

the agonizing considerations that had assailed her before, but which she, at length, endeavoured to sooth by a new remark. If the stranger was Valancourt, it was certain he had come alone, and it appeared, therefore, that he had been able to quit the gardens, without assistance; a circumstance which did not seem probable, had his wound been dangerous. With this consideration, she endeavoured to support herself, during the enquiries, that were making by her servants in the neighbourhood; but day after day came, and still closed in uncertainty, concerning this affair: and Emily, suffering in silence, at length, drooped, and sunk under the pressure of her anxiety. She was attacked by a slow fever, and when she yielded to the persuasion of Annette to send for medical advice, the physicians prescribed little beside air, gentle exercise and amusement; but how was this last to be obtained? She, however, endeavoured to abstract her thoughts from the subject of her anxiety, by employing them in promoting

moting that happiness in others, which she had lost herself; and, when the evening was fine, she usually took an airing, including in her ride the cottages of some of her tenants, on whose condition she made such observations, as often enabled her, unasked, to fulfil their wishes.

Her indisposition, and the business she engaged in, relative to this estate, had already protracted her stay at Tholouse beyond the period she had formerly fixed for her departure to La Vallée; and now she was unwilling to leave the only place, where it seemed possible, that certainty could be obtained on the subject of her distress. But the time was come, when her presence was necessary at La Vallée, a letter from the Lady Blanche now informing her, that the Count and herself, being then at the chateau of the Baron St. Foix, proposed to visit her at La Vallée, on their way home, as soon as they should be informed of her arrival there. Blanche added, that they made this visit, with the hope of inducing her

her to return with them to Chateau-le-Blanc.

Emily having replied to the letter of her friend, and said that she should be at La Vallée in a few days, made hasty preparations for the journey ; and, in thus leaving Toulouse, endeavoured to support herself with a belief, that, if any fatal accident had happened to Valancourt, she must in this interval have heard of it.

On the evening before her departure, she went to take leave of the terrace and the pavilion. The day had been sultry, but a light shower, that fell just before sun-set, had cooled the air, and given that soft verdure to the woods and pastures, which is so refreshing to the eye ; while the rain-drops, still trembling on the shrubs, glittered in the last yellow gleam, that lighted up the scene, and the air was filled with fragrance, exhaled by the late shower, from herbs and flowers, and from the earth itself. But the lovely prospect, which Emily beheld from the terrace, was no longer viewed by her

with delight ; she sighed deeply as her eye wandered over it, and her spirits were in a state of such dejection, that she could not think of her approaching return to La Vallée, without tears, and seemed to mourn again the death of her father, as if it had been an event of yesterday. Having reached the pavilion, she seated herself at the open lattice, and, while her eyes settled on the distant mountains, that overlooked Gascony, still gleaming on the horizon, though the sun had now left the plains below, “ Alas !” said she, “ I return to your long-lost scenes, but shall meet no more the parents that were wont to render them delightful!—no more shall see the smile of welcome, or hear the well-known voice of fondness :—all will now be cold and silent in what was once my happy home.”

Tears stole down her cheek, as the remembrance of what that home had been returned to her ; but, after indulging her sorrow for some time, she checked it, accusing herself of ingratitude in forgetting the

the friends, that she possessed, while she lamented those that were departed ; and she, at length, left the pavilion and the terrace, without having observed a shadow of Valancourt or of any other person.

C H A P. XI.

" Ah happy hills ! ah pleasing shade !
 Ah fields belov'd in vain !
 Where once my careless childhood stray'd,
 A stranger yet to pain !
 I feel the gales, that from ye blow,
 A momentary bliss bestow
 As waving fresh their gladsome wing,
 My weary soul they seem to sooth."

GRAY.

ON the following morning, Emily left
 Tholouse at an early hour, and reached La
 Vallée about sun-set. With the melancholy
 she experienced on the review of a place
 which had been the residence of her parents,
 and the scene of her earliest delight, was
 mingled, after the first shock had subsided,
 a tender and undescribable pleasure. For
 time had so far blunted the acuteness of
 her grief, that she now courted every scene
 that awakened the memory of her friends ;
 in every room where she had been accus-
 tomed

tomed to see them, they also seemed to live again; and she felt that La Vallée was still her happiest home. One of the first apartments she visited was that which had been her father's library, and here she seated herself in his arm-chair, and, while she contemplated, with tempered resignation, the picture of past times, which her memory gave, the tears she shed could scarcely be called those of grief.

Soon after her arrival, she was surprised by a visit from the venerable M. Barreaux, who came impatiently to welcome the daughter of his late respected neighbour to her long-deserted home. Emily was comforted by the presence of an old friend, and they passed an interesting hour in conversing of former times, and in relating some of the circumstances that had occurred to each, since they parted.

The evening was so far advanced, when M. Barreaux left Emily, that she could not visit the garden that night; but, on the following morning, she traced its long-regretted scenes

scenes with fond impatience; and, as she walked beneath the groves, which her father had planted, and where she had so often sauntered in affectionate conversation with him, his countenance, his smile, even the accents of his voice, returned with exactness to her fancy, and her heart melted to the tender recollections.

This, too, was his favourite season of the year, at which they had often together admired the rich and variegated tints of these woods, and the magical effect of autumnal lights upon the mountains; and now, the view of these circumstances made memory eloquent. As she wandered pensively on, she fancied the following address

TO AUTUMN.

Sweet Autumn! how thy melancholy grace
Steals on my heart, as through these shades I wind!
Sooth'd by thy breathing sigh, I fondly trace
Each lonely image of the pensive mind!
Lov'd scenes, lov'd friends—long lost! around me rise,
And wake the melting thought, the tender tear!
That tear, that thought, which more than mirth I prize—
Sweet as the gradual tint, that paints thy year!

Thy

Thy farewel smile, with fond regret, I view,
 Thy beaming lights, soft gliding o'er the woods;
 Thy distant landscape, touch'd with yellow hue
 While falls the lengthen'd gleam; thy winding floods,
 Now veil'd in shade, save where the skiff's white sails
 Swell to the breeze, and catch thy streaming ray.
 But now, e'en now!—the partial vision fails,
 And the wave smiles, as sweeps the cloud away!
 Emblem of life!—Thus checquer'd is its plan,
 Thus joy succeeds to grief—thus smiles the varied man!

One of Emily's earliest enquiries, after her arrival at La Vallée, was concerning Theresa, her father's old servant, whom it may be remembered that M. Quesnel had turned from the house when it was let, without any provision. Understanding that she lived in a cottage at no great distance, Emily walked thither, and, on approaching, was pleased to see, that her habitation was pleasantly situated on a green slope, sheltered by a tuft of oaks, and had an appearance of comfort and extreme neatness. She found the old woman within, picking vine-stalks, who, on perceiving her young mistress, was nearly overcome with joy.

“ Ah !

“ Ah! my dear young lady !” said she, “ I thought I should never see you again in this world, when I heard you was gone to that outlandish country. I have been hardly used, since you went ; I little thought they would have turned me out of my old master’s family in my old age !”

Emily lamented the circumstance, and then assured her, that she would make her latter days comfortable, and expressed satisfaction, on seeing her in so pleasant an habitation.

Theresa thanked her with tears, adding, “ Yes, mademoiselle, it is a very comfortable home, thanks to the kind friend, who took me out of my distress, when you was too far off to help me, and placed me here ! I little thought !—but no more of that—”

“ And who was this kind friend ?” said Emily : “ whoever it was, I shall consider him as mine also.”

“ Ah mademoiselle! that friend forbid me to blazon the good deed—I must not say who it was. But how you are altered since I saw you last ! You look so pale now,
and

and so thin, too ; but then, there is my old master's smile ! Yes, that will never leave you, any more than the goodness, that used to make him smile. Alas-a-day ! the poor lost a friend indeed, when he died !”

Emily was affected by this mention of her father, which Theresa observing, changed the subject. “ I heard, mademoiselle,” said she, “ that Madame Cheron married a foreign gentleman, after all, and took you abroad ; how does she do ?”

Emily now mentioned her death. “ Alas !” said Theresa, “ if she had not been my master's sister, I should never have loved her ; she was always so cross. But how does that dear young gentleman do, M. Valancourt ? he was an handsome youth, and a good one ; is he well, mademoiselle ?”

Emily was much agitated.

“ A blessing on him !” continued Theresa. “ Ah, my dear young lady, you need not look so shy ; I know all about it. Do you think I do not know, that he loves you ? Why, when you was away, mademoiselle,

felle, he used to come to the chateau, and walk about it, so disconsolate! He would go into every room in the lower part of the house, and, sometimes, he would sit himself down in a chair, with his arms across, and his eyes on the floor, and there he would sit, and think, and think, for the hour together. He used to be very fond of the south parlour, because I told him it used to be yours; and there he would stay, looking at the pictures, which I said you drew, and playing upon your lute, that hung up by the window, and reading in your books, till sun-set, and then he must go back to his brother's chateau. And then——”

“ It is enough, Therefa,” said Emily.—
 “ How long have you lived in this cottage—and how can I serve you? will you remain here, or return and live with me?”

“ Nay, ma’amfelle!” said Therefa, “ do not be so shy to your poor old servant. I am sure it is no disgrace to like such a good young gentleman.”

A deep sigh escaped from Emily.

“ Ah ! how he did love to talk of you ! I loved him for that. Nay, for that matter, he liked to hear me talk, for he did not say much himself. But I soon found out what he came to the chateau about. Then, he would go into the garden, and down to the terrace, and sit under that great tree there, for the day together, with one of your books in his hand ; but he did not read much, I fancy ; for one day I happened to go that way, and I heard somebody talking. Who can be here ? says I : I am sure I let nobody into the garden, but the Chevalier ! So I walked softly, to see who it could be ; and behold ! it was the Chevalier himself, talking to himself about you. And he repeated your name, and sighed so ! and said he had lost you for ever, for that you would never return for him. I thought he was out in his reckoning there, but I said nothing, and stole away.”

“ No

“ No more of this trifling,” said Emily, awakening from her reverie : “ it displeases me.”

“ But, when M. Quesnel let the chateau, I thought it would have broke the Chevalier’s heart.”

“ Therefa,” said Emily seriously, “ you must name the Chevalier no more !”

“ Not name him, mademoiselle !” cried Therefa : “ what times are come up now ? Why, I love the Chevalier next to my old master and you, mademoiselle.”

“ Perhaps your love was not well bestowed, then,” replied Emily, trying to conceal her tears ; “ but, however that might be, we shall meet no more.”

“ Meet no more !—not well bestowed !” exclaimed Therefa. “ What do I hear ? No, mademoiselle, my love was well bestowed, for it was the Chevalier Valancourt, who gave me this cottage, and has supported me in my old age, ever since M. Quesnel turned me from my master’s house.”

“ The Chevalier Valancourt !” said Emily, trembling extremely.

“ Yes, mademoiselle, he himself, though he made me promise not to tell ; but how could one help, when one heard him ill spoken of ? Ah ! dear young lady, you may well weep, if you have behaved unkindly to him, for a more tender heart than his never young gentleman had. He found me out in my distress, when you was too far off to help me ; and M. Quesnel refused to do so, and bade me go to service again—Alas ! I was too old for that !—The Chevalier found me, and bought me this cottage, and gave me money to furnish it, and bade me seek out another poor woman to live with me ; and he ordered his brother’s steward to pay me, every quarter, that which has supported me in comfort. Think then, mademoiselle, whether I have not reason to speak well of the Chevalier. And there are others, who could have afforded it better than he : and I am afraid he has hurt himself by his generosity, for quarter day is

gone by long since, and no money for me ! But do not weep so, mademoiselle : you are not sorry surely to hear of the poor Chevalier's goodness."

"Sorry !" said Emily, and wept the more. " But how long is it since you have seen him ?"

" Not this many a day, mademoiselle."

" When did you hear of him ?" enquired Emily, with increased emotion.

" Alas ! never since he went away so suddenly into Languedoc ; and he was but just come from Paris then, or I should have seen him, I am sure. Quarter day is gone by long since, and, as I said, no money for me ; and I begin to fear some harm has happened to him ; and if I was not so far from Estuviere, and so lame, I should have gone to enquire before this time ; and I have nobody to send so far."

Emily's anxiety, as to the fate of Valancourt, was now scarcely endurable, and, since propriety would not suffer her to send to the chateau of his brother, she

requested that Theresa would immediately hire some person to go to his steward from herself, and, when he asked for the quarterage due to her, to make enquiries concerning Valancourt. But she first made Theresa promise never to mention her name in this affair, or ever with that of the Chevalier Valancourt; and her former faithfulness to M. St. Aubert induced Emily to confide in her assurances. Theresa now joyfully undertook to procure a person for this errand, and then Emily, after giving her a sum of money to supply her with present comforts, returned, with spirits heavily oppressed, to her home, lamenting, more than ever, that an heart, possessed of so much benevolence as Valancourt's, should have been contaminated by the vices of the world, but affected by the delicate affection, which his kindness to her old servant expressed for herself.

C H A P. XII.

..... " Light thickens, and the crow
 Makes wing to the rooky wood :
 Good things of day begin to droop, and drowse ;
 While night's black agents to their preys do rouze."

MACBETH.

MEANWHILE Count de Villefort and Lady Blanche had passed a pleasant fortnight at the chateau de St. Foix, with the Baron and Barones, during which they made frequent excursions among the mountains, and were delighted with the romantic wildness of Pyrenéan scenery. It was with regret, that the Count bade adieu to his old friends, although with the hope of being soon united with them in one family ; for it was settled, that M. St. Foix, who now attended them into Gascony, should receive the hand of the Lady Blanche, upon their arrival at Chateau-le-Blanc. As the road, from the Baron's residence to La Vallée, was

over some of the wildest tract of the Pyrénées, and where a carriage-wheel had never passed, the Count hired mules for himself and his family, as well as a couple of stout guides, who were well armed, informed of all the passes of the mountains, and who boasted, too, that they were acquainted with every brake and dingle in the way, could tell the names of all the highest points of this chain of Alps, knew every forest, that spread along their narrow vallies, the shallowest part of every torrent they must cross, and the exact distance of every goat-herd's and hunter's cabin they should have occasion to pass,—which last article of learning required no very capacious memory, for even such simple inhabitants were but thinly scattered over these wilds.

The Count left the chateau de St. Foix, early in the morning, with an intention of passing the night at a little inn upon the mountains, about half way to La Vallée, of which his guides had informed him; and, though this was frequented chiefly by Spanish

nish muleteers, on their route into France, and, of course, would afford only sorry accommodation, the Count had no alternative, for it was the only place like an inn, on the road.

After a day of admiration and fatigue, the travellers found themselves, about sunset, in a woody valley, overlooked, on every side, by abrupt heights. They had proceeded for many leagues, without seeing a human habitation, and had only heard, now and then, at a distance, the melancholy tinkling of a sheep-bell; but now they caught the notes of merry music, and presently saw, within a little green recess among the rocks, a group of mountaineers, tripping through a dance. The Count, who could not look upon the happiness, any more than on the misery of others, with indifference, halted to enjoy this scene of simple pleasure. The group before him consisted of French and Spanish peasants, the inhabitants of a neighbouring hamlet, some of whom were performing a sprightly dance, the wo-

men with castanets in their hands, to the sounds of a lute and a tamborine, till, from the brisk melody of France, the music softened into a slow movement, to which two female peasants danced a Spanish Pavan.

The Count, comparing this with the scenes of such gaiety as he had witnessed at Paris, where false taste painted the features, and, while it vainly tried to supply the glow of nature, concealed the charms of animation—where affectation so often distorted the air, and vice perverted the manners—sighed to think, that natural graces and innocent pleasures flourished in the wilds of solitude, while they dropped amidst the concourse of polished society. But the lengthening shadows reminded the travellers, that they had no time to lose; and, leaving this joyous group, they pursued their way towards the little inn, which was to shelter them from the night.

The rays of the setting sun now threw a yellow gleam upon the forests of pine and chestnut,

chestnut, that swept down the lower region of the mountains, and gave resplendent tints to the snowy points above. But soon, even this light faded fast, and the scenery assumed a more tremendous appearance, invested with the obscurity of twilight. Where the torrent had been seen, it was now only heard; where the wild cliffs had displayed every variety of form and attitude, a dark mass of mountains now alone appeared; and the vale, which far, far below had opened its dreadful chasm, the eye could no longer fathom. A melancholy gleam still lingered on the summits of the highest Alps, overlooking the deep repose of evening, and seeming to make the stillness of the hour more awful.

Blanche viewed the scene in silence, and listened with enthusiasm to the murmur of the pines, that extended in dark lines along the mountains, and to the faint voice of the lizard among the rocks, that came at intervals on the air. But her enthusiasm sunk into apprehension, when, as the shadows

deepened, she looked upon the doubtful precipice, that bordered the road, as well as on the various fantastic forms of danger, that glimmered through the obscurity beyond it; and she asked her father, how far they were from the inn, and whether he did not consider the road to be dangerous at this late hour. The Count repeated the first question to the guides, who returned a doubtful answer, adding, that, when it was darker, it would be safest to rest, till the moon rose. "It is scarcely safe to proceed now," said the Count; but the guides, assuring him that there was no danger, went on. Blanche, revived by this assurance, again indulged a pensive pleasure, as she watched the progress of twilight gradually spreading its tints over the woods and mountains, and stealing from the eye every minuter feature of the scene, till the grand outlines of nature alone remained. Then fell the silent dews, and every wild flower, and aromatic plant, that bloomed among the cliffs, breathed forth its sweetness; then, too, when the

moun-

mountain-bee had crept into its blossomed bed, and the hum of every little insect, that had floated gaily in the sun-beam, was hushed, the sound of many streams, not heard till now, murmured at a distance.—The bats alone, of all the animals inhabiting this region, seemed awake; and, while they flitted across the silent path, which Blanche was pursuing, she remembered the following lines, which Emily had given her :

TO THE BAT.

From haunt of man, from day's obtrusive glare,
 Thou shroud'st thee in the ruin's ivy'd tow'r,
 Or in some shadowy glen's romantic bow'r,
 Where wizard forms their mystic charms prepare,
 Where Horror lurks, and ever-boding Care !
 But, at the sweet and silent ev'ning hour,
 When clos'd in sleep is ev'ry languid flow'r,
 Thou lov'st to sport upon the twilight air,
 Mocking the eye, that would thy course pursue,
 In many a wanton-round, elastic, gay,
 Thou flitt'st athwart the pensive wand'rer's way,
 As his lone footsteps print the mountain-dew.
 From Indian isles thou com'st, with Summer's car,
 Twilight thy love—thy guide her beaming star !

To

To a warm imagination, the dubious forms, that float, half veiled in darkness, afford a higher delight, than the most distinct scenery, that the sun can shew. While the fancy thus wanders over landscapes partly of its own creation, a sweet complacency steals upon the mind, and

Refines it all to subtlest feeling,
Bids the tear of rapture roll.

The distant note of a torrent, the weak trembling of the breeze among the woods, or the far-off sound of a human voice, now lost and heard again, are circumstances which wonderfully heighten the enthusiastic tone of the mind. The young St. Foix, who saw the presentations of a fervid fancy, and felt whatever enthusiasm could suggest, sometimes interrupted the silence, which the rest of the party seemed by mutual consent to preserve, remarking and pointing out to Blanche the most striking effect of the hour upon the scenery ; while Blanche, whose apprehensions were beguiled by

by the conversation of her lover, yielded to the taste so congenial to his, and they conversed in a low restrained voice, the effect of the pensive tranquillity, which twilight and the scene inspired, rather than of any fear, that they should be heard. But, while the heart was thus soothed to tenderness, St. Foix gradually mingled, with his admiration of the country, a mention of his affection; and he continued to speak, and Blanche to listen, till the mountains, the woods, and the magical illusions of twilight were remembered no more.

The shadows of evening soon shifted to the gloom of night, which was somewhat anticipated by the vapours, that, gathering fast round the mountains, rolled in dark wreaths along their sides; and the guides proposed to rest, till the moon should rise, adding, that they thought a storm was coming on. As they looked round for a spot, that might afford some kind of shelter, an object was perceived obscurely through the dusk, on a point of rock, a little way
down

down the mountain, which they imagined to be a hunter's or a shepherd's cabin, and the party, with cautious steps, proceeded towards it. Their labour, however, was not rewarded, or their apprehensions soothed; for, on reaching the object of their search, they discovered a monumental cross, which marked the spot to have been polluted by murder.

The darkness would not permit them to read the inscription; but the guides knew this to be a cross, raised to the memory of a Count de Beliard, who had been murdered here by a horde of banditti, that had infested this part of the Pyrenées, a few years before; and the uncommon size of the monument seemed to justify the supposition, that it was erected for a person of some distinction. Blanche shuddered, as she listened to some horrid particulars of the Count's fate, which one of the guides related in a low, restrained tone, as if the sound of his own voice frightened him; but, while they lingered at the cross, attending,

tending to his narrative, a flash of lightning glanced upon the rocks, thunder muttered at a distance, and the travellers, now alarmed, quitted this scene of solitary horror, in search of shelter.

Having regained their former track, the guides, as they passed on, endeavoured to interest the Count by various stories of robbery, and even of murder, which had been perpetrated in the very places they must unavoidably pass, with accounts of their own dauntless courage and wonderful escapes. The chief guide, or rather he, who was the most completely armed, drawing forth one of the four pistols, that were tucked into his belt, swore, that it had shot three robbers within the year. He then brandished a clasp-knife of enormous length, and was going to recount the wonderful execution it had done, when St. Foix, perceiving, that Blanche was terrified, interrupted him. The Count, meanwhile, secretly laughing at the terrible histories and extravagant boastings of the man,

resolved

resolved to humour him, and, telling Blanche in a whisper, his design, began to recount some exploits of his own, which infinitely exceeded any related by the guide.

To these surprising circumstances he so artfully gave the colouring of truth, that the courage of the guides was visibly affected by them, who continued silent, long after the Count had ceased to speak. The loquacity of the chief hero thus laid asleep, the vigilance of his eyes and ears seemed more thoroughly awakened, for he listened, with much appearance of anxiety, to the deep thunder, which murmured at intervals, and often paused, as the breeze, that was now rising, rushed among the pines. But, when he made a sudden halt before a tuft of cork trees, that projected over the road, and drew forth a pistol, before he would venture to brave the banditti which might lurk behind it, the Count could no longer refrain from laughter.

Having now, however, arrived at a level spot,

spot, somewhat sheltered from the air, by overhanging cliffs and by a wood of larch, that rose over a precipice on the left, and the guides being yet ignorant how far they were from the inn, the travellers determined to rest, till the moon should rise, or the storm disperse. Blanche, recalled to a sense of the present moment, looked on the surrounding gloom, with terror ; but giving her hand to St. Foix, she alighted, and the whole party entered a kind of cave, if such it could be called, which was only a shallow cavity, formed by the curve of impending rocks. A light being struck, a fire was kindled, whose blaze afforded some degree of cheerfulness and no small comfort, for, though the day had been hot, the night air of this mountainous region was chilling ; a fire was partly necessary also to keep off the wolves, with which those wilds were infested.

Provisions being spread upon a projection of the rock, the Count and his family partook of a supper, which, in a scene less
rude,

rude, would certainly have been thought less excellent. When the repast was finished, St. Foix, impatient for the moon, fauntered along the precipice, to a point, that fronted the east; but all was yet wrapt in gloom, and the silence of night was broken only by the murmuring of woods, that waved far below, or by distant thunder, and, now and then, by the faint voices of the party he had quitted. He viewed, with emotions of awful sublimity, the long volumes of sulphureous clouds, that floated along the upper and middle regions of the air, and the lightnings that flashed from them, sometimes silently, and, at others, followed by sullen peals of thunder, which the mountains feebly prolonged, while the whole horizon, and the abyfs, on which he stood, were discovered in the momentary light. Upon the succeeding darkness, the fire, which had been kindled in the cave, threw a partial gleam, illumining some points of the opposite rocks, and the summits of pine-woods, that hung beetling
on

on the cliffs below, while their recesses seemed to frown in deeper shade.

St. Foix stopped to observe the picture, which the party in the cave presented, where the elegant form of Blanche was finely contrasted by the majestic figure of the Count, who was seated by her on a rude stone, and each was rendered more impressive by the grotesque habits and strong features of the guides and other attendants, who were in the back ground of the piece. The effect of the light, too, was interesting; on the surrounding figures it threw a strong, though pale gleam, and glittered on their bright arms; while upon the foliage of a gigantic larch, that impended its shade over the cliff above, appeared a red, dusky tint, deepening almost imperceptibly into the blackness of night.

While St. Foix contemplated the scene, the moon, broad and yellow, rose over the eastern summits, from among embattled clouds, and shewed dimly the grandeur of the heavens, the mass of vapours, that rolled

ed half way down the precipice beneath,
and the doubtful mountains.

“ What dreadful pleasure ! there to stand sublime,
Like shipwreck'd mariner on desert coast,
And view th' enormous waste of vapour, tost
In billows length'ning to th' horizon round * !”

From this romantic reverie he was awakened by the voices of the guides, repeating his name, which was reverbed from cliff to cliff, till an hundred tongues seemed to call him ; when he soon quieted the fears of the Count and the Lady Blanche, by returning to the cave. As the storm, however, seemed approaching, they did not quit their place of shelter ; and the Count, seated between his daughter and St. Foix, endeavoured to divert the fears of the former, and conversed on subjects, relating to the natural history of the scene, among which they wandered. He spoke of the mineral and fossile substances, found in the depths of these mountains,—the veins of marble and granite, with which they

* The Minstrel.

abounded,

abounded, the strata of shells, discovered near their summits, many thousand fathom above the level of the sea, and at a vast distance from its present shore;—of the tremendous chasms and caverns of the rocks, the grotesque form of the mountains, and the various phænomena, that seem to stamp upon the world the history of the deluge. From the natural history he descended to the mention of events and circumstances, connected with the civil story of the Pyrenées; named some of the most remarkable fortresses, which France and Spain had erected in the passes of these mountains; and gave a brief account of some celebrated sieges and encounters in early times, when Ambition first frightened Solitude from these her deep recesses, made her mountains, which before had echoed only to the torrent's roar, tremble with the clang of arms, and, when man's first footsteps in her sacred haunts had left the print of blood!

As Blanche sat, attentive to the narrative,

tive, that rendered the scenes doubly interesting, and resigned to solemn emotion, while she considered, that she was on the very ground, once polluted by these events, her reverie was suddenly interrupted by a sound, that came in the wind.—It was the distant bark of a watch dog. The travellers listened with eager hope, and, as the wind blew stronger, fancied, that the sound came from no great distance; and, the guides having little doubt, that it proceeded from the inn they were in search of, the Count determined to pursue his way. The moon now afforded a stronger, though still an uncertain light, as she moved among broken clouds; and the travellers, led by the sound, recommenced their journey along the brow of the precipice, preceded by a single torch, that now contended with the moon-light; for the guides, believing they should reach the inn soon after sun-set, had neglected to provide more. In silent caution they followed the sound, which was heard but at intervals, and which, after some time entirely

entirely ceased. The guides endeavoured however, to point their course to the quarter, whence it had issued, but the deep roaring of a torrent soon seized their attention, and presently they came to a tremendous chasm of the mountain, which seemed to forbid all further progress. Blanche alighted from her mule, as did the Count and St. Foix, while the guides traversed the edge in search of a bridge, which, however rude, might convey them to the opposite side, and they, at length, confessed, what the Count had begun to suspect, that they had been, for some time, doubtful of their way, and were now certain only, that they had lost it.

At a little distance, was discovered a rude and dangerous passage, formed by an enormous pine, which, thrown across the chasm, united the opposite precipices, and which had been felled probably by the hunter, to facilitate his chase of the izard, or the wolf. The whole party, the guides excepted, shuddered at the prospect of crossing this alpine bridge, whose sides afforded no

kind of defence, and from which to fall was to die. The guides, however, prepared to lead over the mules, while Blanche stood trembling on the brink, and listening to the roar of the waters, which were seen descending from rocks above, overhung with lofty pines, and thence precipitating themselves into the deep abyss, where their white surges gleamed faintly in the moon light. The poor animals proceeded over this perilous bridge with instinctive caution, neither frightened by the noise of the cataract, or deceived by the gloom, which the impending foliage threw athwart their way. It was now, that the solitary torch, which had been hitherto of little service, was found to be an inestimable treasure; and Blanche, terrified, shrinking, but endeavouring to recollect all her firmness and presence of mind, preceded by her lover and supported by her father, followed the red gleam of the torch, in safety, to the opposite cliff.

As they went on, the heights contracted, and formed a narrow pass, at the bottom of which,

which, the torrent they had just crossed, was heard to thunder. But they were again cheered by the bark of a dog, keeping watch, perhaps, over the flocks of the mountains, to protect them from the nightly descent of the wolves. The sound was much nearer than before, and, while they rejoiced in the hope of soon reaching a place of repose, a light was seen to glimmer at a distance. It appeared at a height considerably above the level of their path, and was lost and seen again, as if the waving branches of trees sometimes excluded and then admitted its rays. The guides hallooed with all their strength, but the sound of no human voice was heard in return, and, at length, as a more effectual means of making themselves known, they fired a pistol. But while they listened in anxious expectation, the noise of the explosion was alone heard, echoing among the rocks, and it gradually sunk into a silence, which no friendly hint of man disturbed. The light, however, that had been seen before, now

became plainer, and, soon after, voices were heard indistinctly on the wind ; but, upon the guides repeating the call, the voices suddenly ceased, and the light disappeared.

The Lady Blanche was now almost sinking beneath the pressure of anxiety, fatigue and apprehension, and the united efforts of the Count and St. Foix could scarcely support her spirits. As they continued to advance, an object was perceived on a point of rock above, which, the strong rays of the moon then falling on it, appeared to be a watch-tower. The Count, from its situation and some other circumstances, had little doubt, that it was such, and believing, that the light had proceeded from thence, he endeavoured to re-animate his daughter's spirits by the near prospect of shelter and repose, which, however rude the accommodation, a ruined watch-tower might afford.

“ Numerous watch-towers have been erected among the Pyrenées,” said the Count, anxious only to call Blanche's attention from the subject of her fears ; “ and
the

the method, by which they give intelligence of the approach of the enemy, is, you know, by fires, kindled on the summits of these edifices. Signals have thus, sometimes, been communicated from post to post, along a frontier line of several hundred miles in length. Then, as occasion may require, the lurking armies emerge from their fortresses and the forests, and march forth, to defend, perhaps, the entrance of some grand pass, where, planting themselves on the heights, they assail their astonished enemies, who wind along the glen below, with fragments of the shattered cliff, and pour death and defeat upon them. The ancient forts, and watch-towers, overlooking the grand passes of the Pyrenées, are carefully preserved ; but some of those in inferior stations have been suffered to fall into decay, and are now frequently converted into the more peaceful habitation of the hunter, or the shepherd, who, after a day of toil, retires hither, and, with his faithful dogs, forgets, near a cheerful blaze, the labour of

the chace, or the anxiety of collecting his wandering flocks, while he is sheltered from the nightly storm."

"But are they always thus peacefully inhabited?" said the Lady Blanche.

"No," replied the Count, "they are sometimes the asylum of French and Spanish smugglers, who cross the mountains with contraband goods from their respective countries, and the latter are particularly numerous, against whom strong parties of the king's troops are sometimes sent. But the desperate resolution of these adventurers, who, knowing that, if they are taken, they must expiate the breach of the law by the most cruel death, travel in large parties, well armed, often daunts the courage of the soldiers. The smugglers, who seek only safety, never engage, when they can possibly avoid it; the military, also, who know, that in these encounters, danger is certain, and glory almost unattainable, are equally reluctant to fight; an engagement, therefore, very seldom happens, but,

but, when it does, it never concludes till after the most desperate and bloody conflict. You are inattentive, Blanche," added the Count: " I have wearied you with a dull subject; but see, yonder, in the moon-light, is the edifice we have been in search of, and we are fortunate to be so near it, before the storm bursts."

Blanche, looking up, perceived, that they were at the foot of the cliff, on whose summit the building stood, but no light now issued from it; the barking of the dog too had, for some time, ceased, and the guides began to doubt, whether this was really the object of their search. From the distance, at which they surveyed it, shewn imperfectly by a cloudy moon, it appeared to be of more extent than a single watch-tower; but the difficulty was how to ascend the height, whose abrupt declivities seemed to afford no kind of path-way.

While the guides carried forward the torch to examine the cliff, the Count, remaining with Blanche and St. Foix at its

foot, under the shadow of the woods, endeavoured again to beguile the time by conversation, but again anxiety abstracted the mind of Blanche; and he then consulted, apart with St. Foix, whether it would be advisable, should a path be found, to venture to an edifice, which might possibly harbour banditti. They considered that their own party was not small, and that several of them were well armed; and, after enumerating the dangers, to be incurred by passing the night in the open wild, exposed, perhaps, to the effects of a thunder storm, there remained not a doubt, that they ought to endeavour to obtain admittance to the edifice above, at any hazard respecting the inhabitants it might harbour; but the darkness and the dead silence, that surrounded it, appeared to contradict the probability of its being inhabited at all.

A shout from the guides aroused their attention, after which, in a few minutes, one of the Count's servants returned with intelligence, that a path was found, and they immediately

immediately hastened to join the guides, when they all ascended a little winding way cut in the rock among the thickets of dwarf wood, and, after much toil and some danger, reached the summit, where several ruined towers, surrounded by a massy wall, rose to their view, partially illumined by the moon-light. The space around the building was silent, and apparently forsaken, but the Count was cautious; "Step softly," said he, in a low voice, "while we reconnoitre the edifice."

Having proceeded silently along for some paces, they stopped at a gate, whose portals were terrible even in ruins, and, after a moment's hesitation, passed on to the court of entrance, but paused again at the head of a terrace, which, branching from it, ran along the brow of a precipice. Over this, rose the main body of the edifice, which was now seen to be, not a watch-tower, but one of those ancient fortresses, that, from age and neglect, had fallen to decay. Many parts of it, however, appeared to be still

entire ; it was built of gray stone, in the heavy Saxon-gothic style, with enormous round towers, buttresses of proportionable strength, and the arch of the large gate, which seemed to open into the hall of the fabric, was round, as was that of a window above. The air of solemnity, which must so strongly have characterized the pile even in the days of its early strength, was now considerably heightened by its shattered battlements and half-demolished walls, and by the huge masses of ruin, scattered in its wide area, now silent and grass-grown. In this court of entrance stood the gigantic remains of an oak, that seemed to have flourished and decayed with the building, which it still appeared frowningly to protect by the few remaining branches, leafless and moss-grown, that crowned its trunk, and whose wide extent told how enormous the tree had been in a former age. This fortress was evidently once of great strength, and, from its situation on a point of rock, impending over a deep glen, had been of great power to annoy,

noy, as well as to resist; the Count, therefore, as he stood surveying it, was somewhat surpris'd, that it had been suffered, ancient as it was, to sink into ruins, and its present lonely and deserted air excited in his breast emotions of melancholy awe. While he indulged, for a moment, these emotions, he thought he heard a sound of remote voices steal upon the stillness, from within the building, the front of which he again surveyed with scrutinizing eyes, but yet no light was visible. He now determined to walk round the fort, to that remote part of it, whence he thought the voices had arisen, that he might examine whether any light could be discerned there, before he ventured to knock at the gate; for this purpose, he entered upon the terrace, where the remains of cannon were yet apparent in the thick walls, but he had not proceeded many paces, when his steps were suddenly arrested by the loud barking of a dog within, and which he fancied to be the same, whose voice had been the means of bringing

the travellers thither. It now appeared certain, that the place was inhabited, and the Count returned to consult again with St. Foix, whether he should try to obtain admittance, for its wild aspect had somewhat shaken his former resolution; but, after a second consultation, he submitted to the considerations, which before determined him, and which were strengthened by the discovery of the dog, that guarded the fort, as well as by the stillness that pervaded it. He, therefore, ordered one of his servants to knock at the gate, who was advancing to obey him, when a light appeared through the loop hole of one of the towers, and the Count called loudly, but, receiving no answer, he went up to the gate himself, and struck upon it with an iron-pointed pole, which had assisted him to climb the steep. When the echoes had ceased, that this blow had awakened, the renewed barking,—and there were now more than one dog,—was the only sound, that was heard. The Count stepped back, a few paces, to observe whether

whether the light was in the tower, and, perceiving, that it was gone, he returned to the portal, and had lifted the pole to strike again, when again he fancied he heard the murmur of voices within, and paused to listen. He was confirmed in the supposition, but they were too remote, to be heard otherwise than in a murmur, and the Count now let the pole fall heavily upon the gate, when almost immediately a profound silence followed. It was apparent, that the people within had heard the sound, and their caution in admitting strangers gave him a favourable opinion of them. "They are either hunters or shepherds," said he, "who, like ourselves, have probably sought shelter from the night within these walls, and are fearful of admitting strangers, lest they should prove robbers. I will endeavour to remove their fears." So saying he called aloud, "We are friends, who ask shelter from the night." In a few moments, steps were heard within, which approached, and a voice then enquired—"Who calls?"

"Friends,"

“ Friends,” repeated the Count ; “ open the gates, and you shall know more.”— Strong bolts were now heard to be undrawn, and a man, armed with a hunting spear, appeared. “ What is it you want at this hour ?” said he. The Count beckoned his attendants, and then answered, that he wished to enquire the way to the nearest cabin. “ Are you so little acquainted with these mountains,” said the man, “ as not to know, that there is none, within several leagues ? I cannot shew you the way ; you must seek it—there’s a moon.” Saying this, he was closing the gate, and the Count was turning away, half disappointed and half afraid, when another voice was heard from above, and, on looking up, he saw a light, and a man’s face, at the grate of the portal. “ Stay, friend, you have lost your way ?” said the voice. “ You are hunters, I suppose, like ourselves : I will be with you presently.” The voice ceased, and the light disappeared. Blanche had been alarmed by the appearance of the man, who had
opened

opened the gate, and she now entreated her father to quit the place ; but the Count had observed the hunter's spear, which he carried ; and the words from the tower encouraged him to await the event. The gate was soon opened, and several men in hunters' habits, who had heard above what had passed below, appeared, and, having listened some time to the Count, told him he was welcome to rest there for the night. They then pressed him, with much courtesy, to enter, and to partake of such fare as they were about to sit down to. The Count, who had observed them attentively while they spoke, was cautious, and somewhat suspicious ; but he was also weary, fearful of the approaching storm, and of encountering alpine heights in the obscurity of night ; being likewise somewhat confident in the strength and number of his attendants, he, after some further consideration, determined to accept the invitation. With this resolution he called his servants, who, advancing round the tower, behind which some of them

them had silently listened to this conference, followed their Lord, the Lady Blanche, and St. Foix into the fortress. The strangers led them on to a large and rude hall, partially seen by a fire, that blazed at its extremity, round which four men, in the hunters' dress, were seated, and on the hearth were several dogs stretched in sleep. In the middle of the hall stood a large table, and over the fire some part of an animal was boiling. As the Count approached, the men arose, and the dogs half raising themselves, looked fiercely at the strangers, but, on hearing their masters' voices, kept their postures on the hearth.

Blanche looked round this gloomy and spacious hall; then at the men, and to her father, who, smiling cheerfully at her, addressed himself to the hunters. "This is an hospitable hearth," said he, "the blaze of a fire is reviving after having wandered so long in these dreary wilds. Your dogs are tired; what success have you had?" "Such as we usually have," replied one of the men, who

had been seated in the hall, "we kill our game with tolerable certainty." "These are fellow hunters," said one of the men who had brought the Count hither, "that have lost their way, and I have told them there is room enough in the fort for us all." "Very true, very true," replied his companion, "What luck have you had in the chace, brothers? We have killed two izards, and that, you will say, is pretty well." "You mistake, friend," said the Count, "we are not hunters, but travellers; but, if you will admit us to hunters' fare, we shall be well contented, and will repay your kindness." "Sit down then, brother," said one of the men: "Jacques, lay more fuel on the fire, the kid will soon be ready; bring a seat for the lady too. Ma'amfelle, will you taste our brandy? it is true Barcelona, and as bright as ever flowed from a keg." Blanche timidly smiled, and was going to refuse, when her father prevented her, by taking, with a good humoured air, the glass offered to his daughter; and Mons. St. Foix, who
was

was seated next her, pressed her hand, and gave her an encouraging look ; but her attention was engaged by a man, who sat silently by the fire, observing St. Foix, with a steady and earnest eye.

“ You lead a jolly life here,” said the Count. “ The life of a hunter is a pleasant and a healthy one; and the repose is sweet, which succeeds to your labour.”

“ Yes,” replied one of his hosts, “ our life is pleasant enough. We live here only during the summer, and autumnal months; in winter, the place is dreary, and the swollen torrents, that descend from the heights, put a stop to the chase.”

“ 'Tis a life of liberty and enjoyment,” said the Count: “ I should like to pass a month in your way very well.”

“ We find employment for our guns too,” said a man who stood behind the Count: “ here are plenty of birds, of delicious flavour, that feed upon the wild thyme and herbs, that grow in the vallies. Now I think of it, there is a brace of birds hung
up

up in the stone gallery ; go fetch them, Jacques, we will have them dressed."

The Count now made enquiry concerning the method of pursuing the chase among the rocks and precipices of these romantic regions, and was listening to a curious detail, when a horn was sounded at the gate. Blanche looked timidly at her father, who continued to converse on the subject of the chase, but whose countenance was somewhat expressive of anxiety, and who often turned his eyes towards that part of the hall nearest the gate. The horn sounded again, and a loud halloo succeeded. " These are some of our companions, returned from their day's labour," said a man, going lazily from his seat towards the gate ; and in a few minutes, two men appeared, each with a gun over his shoulder, and pistols in his belt. " What cheer, my lads ? what cheer ?" said they, as they approached. " What luck ?" returned their companions : " have you brought home your supper ? You shall have none else."

" Hah !

“ Hah ! who the devil have you brought home ?” said they in bad Spanish, on perceiving the Count’s party, “ are they from France, or Spain ?—where did you meet with them ?”

“ They met with us, and a merry meeting too,” replied his companion aloud in good French. “ This chevalier, and his party, had lost their way, and asked a night’s lodging in the fort.” The others made no reply, but threw down a kind of knapsack, and drew forth several brace of birds. The bag sounded heavily as it fell to the ground, and the glitter of some bright metal within glanced on the eye of the Count, who now surveyed, with a more enquiring look, the man, that held the knapsack. He was a tall robust figure, of a hard countenance, and had short black hair, curling in his neck. Instead of the hunters’ dress, he wore a faded military uniform ; sandals were laced on his broad legs, and a kind of short trowsers hung from his waist. On his head he wore a leathern cap, somewhat resembling in
shape

shape an ancient Roman helmet ; but the brows that scowled beneath it, would have characterised those of the barbarians, who conquered Rome, rather than those of a Roman soldier. The Count, at length, turned away his eyes, and remained silent and thoughtful, till, again raising them, he perceived a figure standing in an obscure part of the hall, fixed in attentive gaze on St. Foix, who was conversing with Blanche, and did not observe this ; but the Count, soon after, saw the same man looking over the shoulder of the soldier as attentively at himself. He withdrew his eye, when that of the Count met it, who felt mistrust gathering fast upon his mind, but feared to betray it in his countenance, and, forcing his features to assume a smile, addressed Blanche on some indifferent subject. When he again looked round, he perceived, that the soldier and his companion were gone.

The man, who was called Jacques, now returned from the stone-gallery. “ A fire is lighted there,” said he, “ and the birds are dressing ;

dressings; the table too is spread there, for that place is warmer than this."

His companions approved of the removal, and invited their guests to follow to the gallery, of whom Blanche appeared distressed, and remained silent, and St. Foix looked at the Count, who said, he preferred the comfortable blaze of the fire he was then near. The hunters, however, commended the warmth of the other apartment, and pressed his removal with such seeming courtesy, that the Count, half doubting, and half fearful of betraying his doubts, consented to go. The long and ruinous passages, through which they went, somewhat daunted him; but the thunder, which now burst in loud peals above, made it dangerous to quit this place of shelter, and he forbore to provoke his conductors by shewing that he distrusted them. The hunters led the way, with a lamp; the Count and St. Foix, who wished to please their hosts by some instances of familiarity, carried each a seat, and Blanche followed, with

with faltering steps. As she passed on, part of her dress caught on a nail in the wall, and, while she stopped, somewhat too scrupulously, to disengage it, the Count, who was talking to St. Foix, and neither of whom observed the circumstance, followed their conductor round an abrupt angle of the passage, and Blanche was left behind in darkness. The thunder prevented them from hearing her call, but, having disengaged her dress, she quickly followed, as she thought, the way they had taken. A light, that glimmered at a distance, confirmed this belief, and she proceeded towards an open door, whence it issued, conjecturing the room beyond to be the stone gallery the men had spoken of. Hearing voices as she advanced, she paused within a few paces of the chamber, that she might be certain whether she was right, and from thence, by the light of a lamp, that hung from the ceiling, observed four men, seated round a table, over which they leaned in apparent consultation. In one of them she distinguished

guished the features of him, whom she had observed, gazing at St. Foix, with such deep attention; and who was now speaking in an earnest, though restrained voice, till, one of his companions seeming to oppose him, they spoke together in a loud and harsher tone. Blanche, alarmed by perceiving, that neither her father or St. Foix were there, and terrified at the fierce countenances and manners of these men, was turning hastily from the chamber, to pursue her search of the gallery, when she heard one of the men say :

“ Let all dispute end here. Who talks of danger? Follow my advice, and there will be none—secure *them*, and the rest are an easy prey.” Blanche struck with these words, paused a moment, to hear more. “ There is nothing to be got by the rest,” said one of his companions, “ I am never for blood when I can help it—dispatch the two others, and our business is done; the rest may go.”

“ May they so?” exclaimed the first ruf-
fian,

fian, with a tremendous oath—"What! to tell how we have disposed of their masters, and to send the king's troops to drag us to the wheel! You was always a choice adviser—I warrant we have not yet forgot St. Thomas's eve last year."

Blanche's heart now sunk with horror. Her first impulse was to retreat from the door, but, when she would have gone, her trembling frame refused to support her, and, having tottered a few paces, to a more obscure part of the passage, she was compelled to listen to the dreadful councils of those, who, she was no longer suffered to doubt, were banditti. In the next moment, she heard the following words, "Why you would not murder the whole *gang*?"

"I warrant our lives are as good as theirs," replied his comrade. "If we don't kill them, they will hang us: better they should die than we be hanged."

"Better, better," cried his comrades.

"To commit murder, is a hopeful way of escaping the gallows!" said the first ruf-

fan—"many an honest fellow has run his head into the noose that way, though." There was a pause of some moments, during which they appeared to be considering.

"Confound those fellows," exclaimed one of the robbers impatiently, "they ought to have been here by this time; they will come back presently with the old story, and no booty: if they were here, our business would be plain and easy. I see we shall not be able to do the business to-night, for our numbers are not equal to the enemy, and in the morning they will be for marching off, and how can we detain them without force?"

"I have been thinking of a scheme, that will do," said one of his comrades: "if we can dispatch the two chevaliers silently, it will be easy to master the rest."

"That's a plausible scheme, in good faith," said another with a smile of scorn—"If I can eat my way through the prison wall, I shall be at liberty!—How can we dispatch them *silently*?"

"By

“ By poison,” replied his companions.

“ Well said ! that will do,” said the second ruffian, “ that will give a lingering death too, and satisfy my revenge. These barons shall take care how they again tempt our vengeance.”

“ I knew the son, the moment I saw him,” said the man, whom Blanche had observed gazing on St. Foix, “ though he does not know me ; the father I had almost forgotten.”

“ Well, you may say what you will,” said the third ruffian, “ but I don’t believe he is the Baron, and I am as likely to know as any of you, for I was one of them, that attacked him, with our brave lads, that suffered.”

“ And was not I another ?” said the first ruffian, “ I tell you he is the Baron ; but what does it signify whether he is or not ?— shall we let all this booty go out of our hands ? It is not often we have such luck as this. While we run the chance of the wheel for smuggling a few pounds of to-

bacco, to cheat the king's manufactory, and of breaking our necks down the precipices in the chace of our food ; and, now and then, rob a brother smuggler, or a straggling pilgrim, of what scarcely repays us the powder we fire at them, shall we let such a prize as this go ? Why they have enough about them to keep us for——”

“ I am not for that, I am not for that,” replied the third robber, “ let us make the most of them : only, if this is the Baron, I should like to have a flash the more at him, for the sake of our brave comrades, that he brought to the gallows.”

“ Aye, aye, flash as much as you will,” rejoined the first man, “ but I tell you the Baron is a taller man.”

“ Confound your quibbling,” said the second ruffian, “ shall we let them go or not ? If we stay here much longer, they will take the hint, and march off without our leave. Let them be who they will, they are rich, or why all those servants ? Did you see the ring, he, you call the Baron, had

had on his finger ?—it was diamond ; but he has not got it on now : he saw me looking at it, I warrant, and took it off.”

“ Aye, and then there is the picture ; did you see that ? She has not taken that off,” observed the first ruffian, “ it hangs at her neck ; if it had not sparkled so, I should not have found it out, for it was almost hid by her dress ; those are diamonds too, and a rare many of them there must be, to go round such a large picture.”

“ But how are we to manage this business ?” said the second ruffian : “ let us talk of that, there is no fear of there being booty enough, but how are we to secure it ?”

“ Aye, aye,” said his comrades, “ let us talk of that, and remember no time is to be lost.”

“ I am still for poison,” observed the third, “ but consider their number ; why there are nine or ten of them, and armed too ; when I saw so many at the gate, I was not

for letting them in, you know, nor you either."

"I thought they might be some of our enemies," replied the second, "I did not so much mind numbers."

"But you must mind them now," rejoined his comrade, "or it will be worse for you. We are not more than six, and how can we master ten by open force? I tell you we must give some of them a dose, and the rest may then be managed."

"I'll tell you a better way," rejoined the other impatiently, "draw closer."

Blanche, who had listened to this conversation, in an agony, which it would be impossible to describe, could no longer distinguish what was said, for the ruffians now spoke in lowered voices; but the hope, that she might save her friends from the plot, if she could find her way quickly to them, suddenly re-animated her spirits, and lent her strength enough to turn her steps in search of the gallery. Terror, however,
and

and darkness conspired against her, and, having moved a few yards, the feeble light, that issued from the chamber, no longer even contended with the gloom, and, her foot stumbling over a step that crossed the passage, she fell to the ground.

The noise startled the banditti, who became suddenly silent, and then all rushed to the passage, to examine whether any person was there, who might have overheard their councils. Blanche saw them approaching, and perceived their fierce and eager looks : but, before she could raise herself, they discovered and seized her, and as they dragged her towards the chamber they had quitted, her screams drew from them horrible threatenings.

Having reached the room, they began to consult what they should do with her. " Let us first know what she has heard," said the chief robber. " How long have you been in the passage, lady, and what brought you there ?"

" Let us first secure that picture," said

one of his comrades, approaching the trembling Blanche. “ Fair lady, by your leave that picture is mine ; come, surrender it, or I shall seize it.”

Blanche, entreating their mercy, immediately gave up the miniature, while another of the ruffians fiercely interrogated her, concerning what she had overheard of their conversation, when, her confusion and terror too plainly telling what her tongue feared to confess, the ruffians looked expressively upon one another, and two of them withdrew to a remote part of the room, as if to consult further.

“ These are diamonds, by St. Peter !” exclaimed the fellow, who had been examining the miniature, “ and here is a very pretty picture too, ’faith ; as handsome a young chevalier, as you would wish to see by a summer’s sun. Lady, this is your spouse, I warrant, for it is the spark, that was in your company just now.”

Blanche, sinking with terror, conjured him to have pity on her, and, delivering him

him her purse, promised to say nothing of what had passed, if he would suffer her to return to her friends.

He smiled ironically, and was going to reply, when his attention was called off by a distant noise, and, while he listened, he grasped the arm of Blanche more firmly, as if he feared she would escape from him, and she again shrieked for help.

The approaching sounds called the ruffians from the other part of the chamber: "We are betrayed," said they; "but let us listen a moment, perhaps it is only our comrades come in from the mountains, and if so, our work is sure; listen!"

A distant discharge of shot confirmed this supposition for a moment, but, in the next, the former sounds drawing nearer, the clashing of swords, mingled with the voices of loud contention and with heavy groans, were distinguished in the avenue leading to the chamber. While the ruffians prepared their arms, they heard themselves called by some of their comrades afar off, and then a

shrill horn was sounded without the fortrefs, a signal, it appeared, they too well understood; for three of them, leaving the Lady Blanche to the care of the fourth, instantly rushed from the chamber.

While Blanche, trembling, and nearly fainting, was supplicating for release, she heard amid the tumult, that approached, the voice of St. Foix, and she had scarcely renewed her shriek, when the door of the room was thrown open, and he appeared, much disfigured with blood, and pursued by several ruffians. Blanche neither saw, or heard any more; her head swam, her sight failed, and she became senseless in the arms of the robber, who had detained her.

When she recovered, she perceived, by the gloomy light, that trembled round her, that she was in the same chamber; but neither the Count, St. Foix, or any other person appeared, and she continued, for some time, entirely still, and nearly in a state of stupefaction. But the dreadful images of the past returning, she endeavoured

voured to raise herself, that she might seek her friends, when a sullen groan, at a little distance, reminded her of St. Foix, and of the condition, in which she had seen him enter this room ; then, starting from the floor, by a sudden effort of horror, she advanced to the place whence the sound had proceeded, where a body was lying stretched upon the pavement, and where, by the glimmering light of a lamp, she discovered the pale and disfigured countenance of St. Foix. Her horrors, at that moment, may be easily imagined. He was speechless ; his eyes were half closed, and, on the hand, which she grasped in the agony of despair, cold damps had settled. While she vainly repeated his name, and called for assistance, steps approached, and a person entered the chamber, who, she soon perceived, was not the Count, her father ; but, what was her astonishment, when, supplicating him to give his assistance to St. Foix, she discovered Ludovico ! He scarcely paused to recognise her, but immediately bound up

the wounds of the Chevalier, and, perceiving, that he had fainted probably from loss of blood, ran for water; but he had been absent only a few moments, when Blanche heard other steps approaching, and, while she was almost frantic with apprehension of the ruffians, the light of a torch flashed upon the walls, and then Count De Villefort appeared, with an affrighted countenance, and breathless with impatience, calling upon his daughter. At the sound of his voice she rose, and ran to his arms, while he, letting fall the bloody sword he held, pressed her to his bosom in a transport of gratitude and joy, and then hastily enquired for St. Foix, who now gave some signs of life. Ludovico soon after returning with water and brandy, the former was applied to his lips, and the latter to his temples and hands, and Blanche, at length, saw him unclofe his eyes, and then heard him enquire for her; but the joy she felt, on this occasion, was interrupted by new alarms, when Ludovico said it would be-
 neces-

necessary to remove *Monf. St. Foix* immediately, and added, “ The banditti, that are out, my Lord, were expected home, an hour ago, and they will certainly find us, if we delay. That shrill horn, they know, is never sounded by their comrades but on most desperate occasions, and it echoes among the mountains for many leagues round. I have known them brought home by its sound even from the *Pied de Melicant*. Is any body standing watch at the great gate, my Lord ?”

“ Nobody,” replied the Count ; “ the rest of my people are now scattered about, I scarcely know where. Go, *Ludovico*, collect them together, and look out yourself, and listen if you hear the feet of mules.”

Ludovico then hurried away, and the Count consulted as to the means of removing *St. Foix*, who could not have borne the motion of a mule, even if his strength would have supported him in the saddle.

While

While the Count was telling, that the banditti, whom they had found in the fort, were secured in the dungeon, Blanche observed that he was himself wounded, and that his left arm was entirely useless ; but he smiled at her anxiety, assuring her the wound was trifling.

The Count's servants, except two who kept watch at the gate, now appeared, and, soon after, Ludovico. " I think I hear mules coming along the glen, my Lord," said he, " but the roaring of the torrent below will not let me be certain ; however, I have brought what will serve the Chevalier," he added, shewing a bear's skin, fastened to a couple of long poles, which had been adapted for the purpose of bringing home such of the banditti as happened to be wounded in their encounters. Ludovico spread it on the ground, and, placing the skins of several goats upon it, made a kind of bed, into which the Chevalier, who was however now much revived, was gently lifted ; and, the poles being raised upon the shoulders of
the

the guides, whose footing among these steep: could best be depended upon, he was borne along with an easy motion. Some of the Count's servants were also wounded—but not materially, and, their wounds being bound up, they now followed to the great gate. As they passed along the hall, a loud tumult was heard at some distance, and Blanche was terrified. “ It is only those villains in the dungeon, my lady,” said Ludovico. “ They seem to be bursting it open,” said the Count. “ No, my Lord,” replied Ludovico, “ it has an iron door; we have nothing to fear from them; but let me go first, and look out from the rampart.”

They quickly followed him, and found their mules browsing before the gates, where the party listened anxiously, but heard no sound, except that of the torrent below and of the early breeze, sighing among the branches of the old oak, that grew in the court; and they were now glad to perceive the first tints of dawn over the mountain-tops.

tops. When they had mounted their mules, Ludovico, undertaking to be their guide, led them by an easier path, than that by which they had formerly ascended, into the glen. “ We must avoid that valley to the east, my Lord,” said he, “ or we may meet the banditti ; they went out that way in the morning.”

The travellers, soon after, quitted this glen, and found themselves in a narrow valley that stretched towards the north-west. The morning light upon the mountains now strengthened fast, and gradually discovered the green hillocks, that skirted the winding feet of the cliffs, tufted with cork tree, and ever-green oak. The thunder clouds being dispersed, had left the sky perfectly serene, and Blanche was revived by the fresh breeze, and by the view of verdure, which the late rain had brightened. Soon after, the sun arose, when the dripping rocks, with the shrubs that fringed their summits, and many a turfy slope below, sparkled in his rays. A wreath of mist was seen, float-
ing

ing along the extremity of the valley, but the gale bore it before the travellers, and the sun-beams gradually drew it up towards the summit of the mountains. They had proceeded about a league, when, St. Foix having complained of extreme faintness, they stopped to give him refreshment, and, that the men, who bore him, might rest. Ludovico had brought from the fort some flasks of rich Spanish wine, which now proved a reviving cordial not only to St. Foix but to the whole party, though to him it gave only a temporary relief, for it fed the fever, that burned in his veins, and he could neither disguise in his countenance the anguish he suffered, or suppress the wish, that he was arrived at the inn, where they had designed to pass the preceding night.

While they thus reposed themselves under the shade of the dark green pines, the Count desired Ludovico to explain shortly, by what means he had disappeared from the north apartment, how he came into the hands of the banditti, and how he had contributed
so

so essentially to serve him and his family, for to him he justly attributed their present deliverance. Ludovico was going to obey him, when suddenly they heard the echo of a pistol-shot, from the way they had passed, and they rose in alarm, hastily to pursue their route.

C H A P. XIII.

“ Ah why did Fate his steps decoy
 In stormy paths to roam,
 Remote from all conjenial joy !”

BEATTIE.

EMILY, mean while, was still suffering anxiety as to the fate of Valancourt ; but Theresa, having, at length, found a person, whom she could entrust on her errand to the steward, informed her, that the messenger would return on the following day ; and Emily promised to be at the cottage, Theresa being too lame to attend her.

In the evening, therefore, Emily set out alone for the cottage, with a melancholy foreboding, concerning Valancourt, while, perhaps, the gloom of the hour might contribute to depress her spirits. It was a gray autumnal evening towards the close of the season ; heavy mists partially obscured the mountains, and a chilling breeze, that sighed
 among

among the beech woods, strewed her path with some of their last yellow leaves. These, circling in the blast and foretelling the death of the year, gave an image of desolation to her mind, and, in her fancy, seemed to announce the death of Valancourt. Of this she had, indeed, more than once so strong a presentiment, that she was on the point of returning home, feeling herself unequal to an encounter with the certainty she anticipated, but, contending with her emotions, she so far commanded them, as to be able to proceed.

While she walked mournfully on, gazing on the long volumes of vapour, that poured upon the sky, and watching the swallows, tossed along the wind, now disappearing among tempestuous clouds, and then emerging, for a moment, in circles upon the calmer air, the afflictions and vicissitudes of her late life seemed pourtrayed in these fleeting images;—thus had she been tossed upon the stormy sea of misfortune for the last year, with but short intervals of peace,
if

if peace that could be called, which was only the delay of evils. And now, when she had escaped from so many dangers, was become independent of the will of those, who had oppressed her, and found herself mistress of a large fortune, now, when she might reasonably have expected happiness, she perceived that she was as distant from it as ever. She would have accused herself of weakness and ingratitude in thus suffering a sense of the various blessings she possessed to be overcome by that of a single misfortune, had this misfortune affected herself alone; but, when she had wept for Valancourt even as living, tears of compassion had mingled with those of regret, and while she lamented a human being degraded to vice, and consequently to misery, reason and humanity claimed these tears, and fortitude had not yet taught her to separate them from those of love; in the present moments, however, it was not the certainty of his guilt, but the apprehension of his death (of a death also, to which she herself, however

ever

ever innocently, appeared to have been in some degree instrumental) that oppressed her. This fear increased, as the means of certainty concerning it approached; and, when she came within view of Theresa's cottage, she was so much disordered, and her resolution failed her so entirely, that, unable to proceed, she rested on a bank, beside her path; where, as she sat, the wind that groaned sullenly among the lofty branches above, seemed to her melancholy imagination to bear the sounds of distant lamentation, and, in the pauses of the gust, she still fancied she heard the feeble and far-off notes of distress. Attention convinced her, that this was no more than fancy; but the increasing gloom, which seemed the sudden close of day, soon warned her to depart, and, with faltering steps, she again moved toward the cottage. Through the casement appeared the cheerful blaze of a wood fire, and Theresa, who had observed Emily approaching, was already at the door to receive her.

“It

“ It is a cold evening, madam,” said she, “ storms are coming on, and I thought you would like a fire. Do take this chair by the hearth.”

Emily, thanking her for this consideration, sat down, and then, looking in her face, on which the wood fire threw a gleam, she was struck with its expression, and, unable to speak, sunk back in her chair with a countenance so full of woe, that Theresa instantly comprehended the occasion of it, but she remained silent. “ Ah !” said Emily, at length, “ it is unnecessary for me to ask the result of your enquiry—your silence, and that look, sufficiently explain it ;—he is dead !”

“ Alas ! my dear young lady,” replied Theresa, while tears filled her eyes, “ this world is made up of trouble ! the rich have their share as well as the poor ! But we must all endeavour to bear what Heaven pleases.”

“ He is dead then !”—interrupted Emily—“ Valancourt is dead !”

“ A-well-a-day ! I fear he is,” replied Theresa.

“ You fear !” said Emily, “ do you only fear ?”

“ Alas ! yes, Madam, I fear he is ! neither the steward, or any of the Epourville family, have heard of him since he left Languedoc, and the Count is in great affliction about him, for he says he was always punctual in writing, but that now he has not received a line from him, since he left Languedoc ; he appointed to be at home, three weeks ago, but he has neither come, or written, and they fear some accident has befallen him. Alas ! that ever I should live to cry for his death ! I am old, and might have died without being missed, but he——” Emily was faint, and asked for some water, and Theresa, alarmed by the voice, in which she spoke, hastened to her assistance, and, while she held the water to Emily’s lips, continued, “ My dear young mistress, do not take it so to heart ; the

Chevalier, may be alive and well, for all this ; let us hope the best !”

“ O no ! I cannot hope,” said Emily, “ I am acquainted with circumstances, that will not suffer me to hope. I am somewhat better now, and can hear what you have to say. Tell me, I entreat, the particulars of what you know.”

“ Stay till you are a little better, mademoiselle, you look sadly !”

“ O no, Theresa, tell me all, while I have the power to hear it,” said Emily, “ tell me all, I conjure you !”

“ Well, madam, I will then ; but the steward did not say much, for Richard says he seemed shy of talking about Monf. Valancourt, and what he gathered was from Gabriel, one of the servants, who said he had heard it from my lord’s gentleman.”

“ What did he hear ?” said Emily.

“ Why, madam, Richard has but a bad memory, and could not remember half of it, and, if I had not asked him a great many questions, I should have heard little

indeed. But he says that Gabriel said, that he and all the other servants were in great trouble about M. Valancourt, for that he was such a kind young gentleman, they all loved him, as well as if he had been their own brother—and now, to think what was become of him! For he used to be so courteous to them all, and, if any of them had been in fault, M. Valancourt was the first to persuade my lord to forgive them. And then, if any poor family was in distress, M. Valancourt was the first, too, to relieve them, though some folks, not a great way off, could have afforded that much better than he. And then, said Gabriel, he was so gentle to every body, and, for all he had such a noble look with him, he never would command, and call about him, as some of your quality people do, and we never minded him the less for that. Nay, says Gabriel, for that matter, we minded him the more, and would all have run to obey him at a word, sooner than if some folks had told us what to do at full length;

length; aye, and were more afraid of displeasing him, too, than of them, that used rough words to us."

Emily, who no longer considered it to be dangerous to listen to praise, bestowed on Valancourt, did not attempt to interrupt Theresa, but sat, attentive to her words, though almost overwhelmed with grief. "My Lord," continued Theresa, " frets about M. Valancourt sadly, and the more, because, they say, he had been rather harsh against him lately. Gabriel says he had it from my Lord's valet, that M. Valancourt had *comported* himself wildly at Paris, and had spent a great deal of money, more a great deal than my Lord liked, for he loves money better than M. Valancourt, who had been led astray sadly. Nay, for that matter, M. Valancourt had been put into prison at Paris, and my Lord, says Gabriel, refused to take him out, and said he deserved to suffer; and, when old Gregoire, the butler, heard of this, he actually bought a walking-stick to take with him to Paris,

to visit his young master ; but the next thing we hear is, that M. Valancourt is coming home. O, it was a joyful day when he came ; but he was sadly altered, and my Lord looked very cool upon him, and he was very sad, indeed. And, soon after, he went away again into Languedoc, and, since that time, we have never seen him."

Theresa paused, and Emily, sighing deeply, remained with her eyes fixed upon the floor, without speaking. After a long pause, she enquired what further Theresa had heard. " Yet why should I ask ?" she added ; " what you have already told is too much. O Valancourt ! thou art gone—forever gone ! and I—I have murdered thee !" These words, and the countenance of despair which accompanied them, alarmed Theresa, who began to fear, that the shock of the intelligence Emily had just received, had affected her senses. " My dear young lady, be composed," said she, " and do not say such frightful words. You murder M. Valancourt,

Valancourt,—dear heart !” Emily replied only by a heavy sigh.

“ Dear lady, it breaks my heart to see you look so,” said Theresa, “ do not sit with your eyes upon the ground, and all so pale and melancholy ; it frightens me to see you.” Emily was still silent, and did not appear to hear any thing that was said to her. “ Besides, mademoiselle,” continued Theresa, “ M. Valancourt may be alive and merry yet, for what we know.”

At the mention of his name, Emily raised her eyes, and fixed them, in a wild gaze, upon Theresa, as if she was endeavouring to understand what had been said. “ Aye, my dear lady,” said Theresa, mistaking the meaning of this considerate air, “ M. Valancourt may be alive and merry yet.”

On the repetition of these words, Emily comprehended their import, but, instead of producing the effect intended, they seemed only to heighten her distress. She rose hastily from her chair, paced the little room,

with quick steps, and, often sighing deeply, clasped her hands, and shuddered.

Meanwhile, Theresa, with simple, but honest affection, endeavoured to comfort her; put more wood on the fire, stirred it up into a brighter blaze, swept the hearth, set the chair, which Emily had left, in a warmer situation, and then drew forth from a cupboard a flask of wine. "It is a stormy night, madam," said she, "and blows cold—do come nearer the fire, and take a glass of this wine; it will comfort you, as it has done me, often and often, for it is not such wine as one gets every day; it is rich Languedoc, and the last of six flasks that M. Valancourt sent me, the night before he left Gascony for Paris. They have served me, ever since, as cordials, and I never drink it, but I think of him, and what kind words he said to me when he gave them. Theresa, says he, you are not young now, and should have a glass of good wine, now and then. I will send you a few flasks, and, when you taste them,
you

you will sometimes remember me your friend. Yes—those were his very words—me your friend!” Emily still paced the room, without seeming to hear what Theresa said, who continued speaking. “And I have remembered him, often enough, poor young gentleman!—for he gave me this roof for a shelter, and that, which has supported me. Ah! he is in heaven, with my blessed master, if ever saint was!”

Theresa’s voice faltered; she wept, and set down the flask, unable to pour out the wine. Her grief seemed to recall Emily from her own, who went towards her, but then stopped, and, having gazed on her, for a moment, turned suddenly away, as if overwhelmed by the reflection, that it was Valancourt, whom Theresa lamented.

While she yet paced the room, the still, soft note of an oboe, or flute, was heard mingling with the blast, the sweetness of which affected Emily’s spirits; she paused a moment in attention; the tender tones, as they swelled along the wind, till they were

lost again in the ruder gust, came with a plaintiveness, that touched her heart, and she melted into tears.

“ Aye,” said Theresa, drying her eyes, “ there is Richard, our neighbour’s son, playing on the oboe ; it is sad enough, to hear such sweet music now.” Emily continued to weep, without replying. “ He often plays of an evening,” added Theresa, “ and, sometimes, the young folks dance to the sound of his oboe. But, dear young lady ! do not cry so ; and pray take a glass of this wine,” continued she, pouring some into a glass, and handing it to Emily, who reluctantly took it.

“ Taste it for M. Valancourt’s sake,” said Theresa, as Emily lifted the glass to her lips, “ for he gave it me, you know, madam.” Emily’s hand trembled, and she spilt the wine as she withdrew it from her lips. “ For whose sake !—who gave the wine ?” said she in a faltering voice. “ M. Valancourt, dear lady. I knew you would be pleased with it. It is the last flask I have left.”

Emily

Emily set the wine upon the table; and burst into tears, while Theresa, disappointed and alarmed, tried to comfort her; but she only waved her hand, entreated she might be left alone, and wept the more.

A knock at the cottage door prevented Theresa from immediately obeying her mistress, and she was going to open it, when Emily, checking her, requested she would not admit any person; but, afterwards, recollecting, that she had ordered her servant to attend her home, she said it was only Philippe, and endeavoured to restrain her tears, while Theresa opened the door.

A voice, that spoke without, drew Emily's attention. She listened, turned her eyes to the door, when a person now appeared, and immediately a bright gleam, that flashed from the fire, discovered—Valancourt!

Emily, on perceiving him, started from her chair, trembled, and, sinking into it again, became insensible to all around her.

A scream from Theresa now told, that she knew Valancourt, whom her imperfect sight,

and the duskiness of the place had prevented her from immediately recollecting; but his attention was immediately called from her to the person, whom he saw, falling from a chair near the fire; and, hastening to her assistance,—he perceived, that he was supporting Emily! The various emotions, that seized him upon thus unexpectedly meeting with her, from whom he had believed he had parted for ever, and on beholding her pale and lifeless in his arms—may, perhaps, be imagined, though they could neither be then expressed, or now described, any more than Emily's sensations, when at length she unclosed her eyes, and, looking up, again saw Valancourt. The intense anxiety, with which he regarded her, was instantly changed to an expression of mingled joy and tenderness, as his eye met hers, and he perceived, that she was reviving. But he could only exclaim, "Emily!" as he silently watched her recovery, while she averted her eye, and feebly attempted to withdraw her hand; but, in these the first moments,

moments, which succeeded to the pangs his supposed death had occasioned her, she forgot every fault, which had formerly claimed indignation, and beholding Valancourt such as he appeared, when he won her early affection, she experienced emotions of only tenderness and joy. . This, alas ! was but the sunshine of a few short moments ; recollections rose, like clouds, upon her mind, and, darkening the illusive image, that possessed it, she again beheld Valancourt, degraded—Valancourt unworthy of the esteem and tenderness she had once bestowed upon him ; her spirits faltered, and, withdrawing her hand, she turned from him to conceal her grief, while he, yet more embarrassed and agitated, remained silent.

A sense of what she owed to herself restrained her tears, and taught her soon to overcome, in some degree, the emotions of mingled joy and sorrow, that contended at her heart, as she rose, and, having thanked him for the assistance he had given her, bade

Theresa good evening. As she was leaving the cottage, Valancourt, who seemed suddenly awakened as from a dream, entreated, in a voice, that pleaded powerfully for compassion, a few moments attention. Emily's heart, perhaps, pleaded as powerfully, but she had resolution enough to resist both, together with the clamorous entreaties of Theresa, that she would not venture home alone in the dark, and had already opened the cottage door, when the pelting storm compelled her to obey their requests.

Silent and embarrassed, she returned to the fire, while Valancourt, with increasing agitation, paced the room, as if he wished, yet feared, to speak, and Theresa expressed without restraint her joy and wonder upon seeing him.

“ Dear heart ! sir,” said she, “ I never was so surprised and overjoyed in my life. We were in great tribulation before you came, for we thought you was dead, and were talking, and lamenting about you, just when you knocked at the door. My young
mistress

mistress there was crying, fit to break her heart——”

Emily looked with much displeasure at Theresa, but, before she could speak, Valancourt, unable to repress the emotion, which Theresa's imprudent discovery occasioned, exclaimed, “O my Emily! am I then still dear to you! Did you, indeed, honour me with a thought—a tear? O heavens! you weep—you weep now!”

“Theresa, sir,” said Emily, with a reserved air, and trying to conquer her tears, “has reason to remember you with gratitude, and she was concerned, because she had not lately heard of you. Allow me to thank you for the kindness you have shewn her, and to say, that, since I am now upon the spot, she must not be further indebted to you.”

“Emily!” said Valancourt, no longer master of his emotions, “is it thus you meet him, whom once you meant to honour with your hand—thus you meet him, who has loved you—suffered for you?—Yet what do

do I say? Pardon me, pardon me, mademoiselle St. Aubert, I know not what I utter. I have no longer any claim upon your remembrance—I have forfeited every pretension to your esteem, your love. Yes! let me not forget, that I once possessed your affections, though to know that I have lost them, is my severest affliction. Affliction—do I call it!—that is a term of mildness.”

“ Dear heart !” said Theresa, preventing Emily from replying, “ talk of once having her affections ! Why, my dear young lady loves you now, better than she does any body in the whole world, though she pretends to deny it.”

“ This is insupportable !” said Emily ; “ Theresa, you know not what you say. Sir, if you respect my tranquillity, you will spare me from the continuance of this distress.”

“ I do respect your tranquillity too much, voluntarily to interrupt it,” replied Valancourt, in whose bosom pride now contended with tenderness ; “ and will not be a voluntary intruder. I would have entreated a few

moments attention—yet I know not for what purpose. You have ceased to esteem me, and to recount to you my sufferings will degrade me more, without exciting even your pity. Yet I have been, O Emily! I am indeed very wretched!” added Valancourt, in a voice, that softened from solemnity into grief.

“What! is my dear young master going out in all this rain!” said Theresa. “No, he shall not stir a step. Dear! dear! to see how gentlefolks can afford to throw away their happiness! Now, if you were poor people, there would be none of this. To talk of unworthiness, and not caring about one another, when I know there are not such a kind-hearted lady and gentleman in the whole province, nor any that love one another half so well, if the truth was spoken!”

Emily, in extreme vexation, now rose from her chair, “I must be gone,” said she, “the storm is over.”

“Stay, Emily, stay, mademoiselle St. Aubert!”

bert!" said Valancourt, summoning all his resolution, "I will no longer distress you by my presence. Forgive me, that I did not sooner obey you, and, if you can, sometimes, pity one, who, in losing you—has lost all hope of peace! May you be happy, Emily, however wretched I remain, happy as my fondest wish would have you!"

His voice faltered with the last words, and his countenance changed, while, with a look of ineffable tenderness and grief, he gazed upon her for an instant, and then quitted the cottage.

"Dear heart! dear heart!" cried Theresa, following him to the door, "why, Monsieur Valancourt! how it rains! What a night is this to turn him out in! Why it will give him his death; and it was but now you was crying, mademoiselle, because he was dead. Well! young ladies do change their mind in a minute, as one may say!"

Emily made no reply, for she heard not what was said, while, lost in sorrow and thought, she remained in her chair by the
fire,

fire, with her eyes fixed, and the image of Valancourt still before them.

“ M. Valancourt is sadly altered ! madam,” said Theresa ; “ he looks so thin to what he used to do, and so melancholy, and then he wears his arm in a sling.”

Emily raised her eyes at these words, for she had not observed this last circumstance, and she now did not doubt, that Valancourt had received the shot of her gardener at Thoulouse ; with this conviction her pity for him returning, she blamed herself for having occasioned him to leave the cottage, during the storm.

Soon after her servants arrived with the carriage, and Emily having censured Theresa for her thoughtless conversation to Valancourt, and strictly charging her never to repeat any hints of the same kind to him, withdrew to her home, thoughtful and disconsolate.

Meanwhile, Valancourt had returned to a little inn of the village, whither he had arrived only a few moments before his visit to Theresa’s cottage, on the way
from

from Tholouse to the chateau of the Count de Duvarney, where he had not been since he bade adieu to Emily at Chateau-le-Blanc, in the neighbourhood of which he had lingered for a considerable time, unable to summon resolution enough to quit a place, that contained the object most dear to his heart. There were times, indeed, when grief and despair urged him to appear again before Emily, and, regardless of his ruined circumstances, to renew his suit. Pride, however, and the tenderness of his affection, which could not long endure the thought of involving her in his misfortunes, at length, so far triumphed over passion, that he relinquished this desperate design, and quitted Chateau-le-Blanc. But still his fancy wandered among the scenes, which had witnessed his early love, and, on his way to Gascony, he stopped at Tholouse, where he remained when Emily arrived, concealing, yet indulging his melancholy in the gardens, where he had formerly passed with her so many happy hours; often recurring,

with

with vain regret, to the evening before her departure for Italy, when she had so unexpectedly met him on the terrace, and endeavouring to recall to his memory every word and look, which had then charmed him, the arguments he had employed to dissuade her from the journey, and the tenderness of their last farewell. In such melancholy recollections he had been indulging, when Emily unexpectedly appeared to him on this very terrace, the evening after her arrival at Thoulouse. His emotions, on thus seeing her, can scarcely be imagined; but he so far overcame the first promptings of love, that he forbore to discover himself, and abruptly quitted the gardens. Still, however, the vision he had seen haunted his mind; he became more wretched than before, and the only solace of his sorrow was to return in the silence of the night; to follow the paths which he believed her steps had pressed, during the day; and, to watch round the habitation where she reposed. It was in one of these mournful wanderings, that

that he had received by the fire of the gardener, who mistook him for a robber, a wound in his arm, which had detained him at Tholouse till very lately, under the hands of a surgeon. There, regardless of himself and careless of his friends, whose late unkindness had urged him to believe, that they were indifferent as to his fate, he remained, without informing them of his situation; and now, being sufficiently recovered to bear travelling, he had taken La Vallée in his way to Estuviere, the Count's residence, partly for the purpose of hearing of Emily, and of being again near her, and partly for that of enquiring into the situation of poor old Theresa, who, he had reason to suppose, had been deprived of her stipend, small as it was, and which enquiry had brought him to her cottage, when Emily happened to be there.

This unexpected interview, which had at once shewn him the tenderness of her love and the strength of her resolution, renewed all the acuteness of the despair, that had attended

tended their former separation, and which no effort of reason could teach him, in these moments, to subdue. Her image, her look, the tones of her voice, all dwelt on his fancy, as powerfully as they had lately appeared to his senses, and banished from his heart every emotion, except those of love and despair.

Before the evening concluded, he returned to Theresa's cottage, that he might hear her talk of Emily, and be in the place, where she had so lately been. The joy, felt and expressed by that faithful servant, was quickly changed to sorrow, when she observed, at one moment, his wild and phrenzied look, and, at another, the dark melancholy, that overhung him.

After he had listened, and for a considerable time, to all she had to relate, concerning Emily, he gave Theresa nearly all the money he had about him, though she repeatedly refused it, declaring, that her mistress had amply supplied her wants; and then, drawing a ring of value from his finger,

ger, he delivered it her with a solemn charge to present it to Emily, of whom he entreated, as a last favour, that she would preserve it for his sake, and sometimes, when she looked upon it, remember the unhappy giver.

Theresa wept as she received the ring, but it was more from sympathy, than from any presentiment of evil; and, before she could reply, Valancourt abruptly left the cottage. She followed him to the door, calling upon his name and entreating him to return; but she received no answer, and saw him no more.

C H A P. XIV.

"Call up him, that left half told
The story of Cambuscan bold."

MILTON.

ON the following morning, as Emily sat in the parlour adjoining the library, reflecting on the scene of the preceding night, Annette rushed wildly into the room, and, without speaking, sunk breathless into a chair. It was some time before she could answer the anxious enquiries of Emily, as to the occasion of her emotion, but, at length, she exclaimed, "I have seen his ghost, madam, I have seen his ghost!"

"Who do you mean?" said Emily, with extreme impatience.

"It came in from the hall, madam," continued Annette, "as I was crossing to the parlour."

"Who are you speaking of?" repeated Emily, "Who came in from the hall?"

"It

“ It was dressed just as I have seen him, often and often,” added Annette. “ Ah! who could have thought——”

Emily’s patience was now exhausted, and she was reprimanding her for such idle fancies, when a servant entered the room, and informed her, that a stranger without begged leave to speak with her.

It immediately occurred to Emily, that this stranger was Valancourt, and she told the servant to inform him, that she was engaged, and could not see any person.

The servant, having delivered his message, returned with one from the stranger, urging the first request, and saying, that he had something of consequence to communicate; while Annette, who had hitherto sat silent and amazed, now started up, and crying, “ It is Ludovico!—it is Ludovico!” ran out of the room. Emily bade the servant follow her, and, if it really was Ludovico, to shew him into the parlour.

In a few minutes, Ludovico appeared, accompanied by Annette, who, as joy rendered
her

her forgetful of all rules of decorum towards her mistress, would not suffer any person to be heard, for some time, but herself. Emily expressed surprise and satisfaction, on seeing Ludovico in safety, and the first emotions increased, when he delivered letters from Count De Villefort and the Lady Blanche, informing her of their late adventure, and of their present situation at an inn among the Pyrenées, where they had been detained by the illness of Mons. St. Foix, and the indisposition of Blanche, who added, that the Baron St. Foix was just arrived to attend his son to his chateau, where he would remain till the perfect recovery of his wounds, and then return to Languedoc, but that her father and herself proposed to be at La Vallée, on the following day. She added, that Emily's presence would be expected at the approaching nuptials, and begged she would be prepared to proceed, in a few days, to Chateau-le-Blanc. For an account of Ludovico's adventure, she referred her to himself; and Emily, though much interested,

ested, concerning the means, by which he had disappeared from the north apartments, had the forbearance to suspend the gratification of her curiosity, till he had taken some refreshment, and had conversed with Annette, whose joy, on seeing him in safety, could not have been more extravagant, had he arisen from the grave.

Meanwhile, Emily perused again the letters of her friends, whose expressions of esteem and kindness were very necessary consolations to her heart, awakened as it was by the late interview to emotions of keener sorrow and regret.

The invitation to Chateau-le-Blanc was pressed with so much kindness by the Count and his daughter, who strengthened it by a message from the Countess, and the occasion of it was so important to her friend, that Emily could not refuse to accept it, nor though she wished to remain in the quiet shades of her native home, could she avoid perceiving the impropriety of remaining there alone, since Valancourt was again
in

in the neighbourhood. Sometimes, too, she thought, that change of scenery and the society of her friends might contribute, more than retirement, to restore her to tranquillity.

When Ludovico again appeared, she desired him to give a detail of his adventure in the north apartments, and to tell by what means he became a companion of the banditti, with whom the Count had found him.

He immediately obeyed, while Annette, who had not yet had leisure to ask him many questions, on the subject, prepared to listen, with a countenance of extreme curiosity, venturing to remind her lady of her incredulity, concerning spirits, in the castle of Udolpho, and of her own sagacity in believing in them; while Emily, blushing at the consciousness of her late credulity, observed, that, if Ludovico's adventure could justify Annette's superstition, he had probably not been here to relate it.

Ludovico smiled at Annette, and bowed to Emily, and then began as follows :

P 2

“ You

“ You may remember, madam, that, on the night, when I sat up in the north chamber, my Lord, the Count, and Mons. Henri accompanied me thither, and that, while they remained there, nothing happened to excite any alarm. When they were gone I made a fire in the bed-room, and, not being inclined to sleep, I sat down on the hearth with a book I had brought with me to divert my mind. I confess I did sometimes look round the chamber, with something like apprehension——”

“ O very like it, I dare say,” interrupted Annette, “ and I dare say too, if the truth was known, you shook from head to foot.”

“ Not quite so bad as that,” replied Ludovico, smiling, “ but several times, as the wind whistled round the castle, and shook the old casements, I did fancy I heard odd noises, and, once or twice, I got up and looked about me; but nothing was to be seen, except the grim figures in the tapestry, which seemed to frown upon me, as I looked at them. I had sat thus for above

an hour," continued Ludovico, "when again I thought I heard a noise, and glanced my eyes round the room, to discover what it came from, but, not perceiving any thing, I began to read again, and, when I had finished the story I was upon, I felt drowsy, and dropped asleep. But presently I was awakened by the noise I had heard before, and it seemed to come from that part of the chamber, where the bed stood; and then, whether it was the story I had been reading that affected my spirits, or the strange reports, that had been spread of these apartments, I don't know, but, when I looked towards the bed again, I fancied I saw a man's face within the dusky curtains."

At the mention of this, Emily trembled, and looked anxiously, remembering the spectacle she had herself witnessed there with Dorothee.

"I confess, madam, my heart did fail me, at that instant," continued Ludovico, "but a return of the noise drew my atten-

tion from the bed, and I then distinctly heard a sound, like that of a key, turning in a lock, but what surprised me more was, that I saw no door where the sound seemed to come from. In the next moment, however, the arras near the bed was slowly lifted, and a person appeared behind it, entering from a small door in the wall. He stood for a moment as if half retreating, with his head bending under the arras, which concealed the upper part of his face except his eyes scowling beneath the tapestry as he held it; and then, while he raised it higher, I saw the face of another man behind, looking over his shoulder. I know not how it was, but, though my sword was upon the table before me, I had not the power just then to seize it, but sat quite still, watching them, with my eyes half shut as if I was asleep. I suppose they thought me so, and were debating what they should do, for I heard them whisper, and they stood in the same posture for the value of a minute, and then,

then, I thought I perceived other faces in the duskiness beyond the door, and heard louder whispers."

"This door surprises me," said Emily, "because I understood, that the Count had caused the arras to be lifted, and the walls examined, suspecting, that they might have concealed a passage through which you had departed."

It does not appear so extraordinary to me, madam," replied Ludovico, "that this door should escape notice, because it was formed in a narrow compartment, which appeared to be part of the outward wall, and, if the Count had not passed over it, he might have thought it was useless to search for a door where it seemed as if no passage could communicate with one; but the truth was, that the passage was formed within the wall itself.—But to return to the men, whom I saw obscurely beyond the door, and who did not suffer me to remain long in suspense, concerning their design. They all rushed into the room, and

surrounded me, though not before I had snatched up my sword to defend myself. But what could one man do against four? They soon disarmed me, and, having fastened my arms, and gagged my mouth, forced me through the private door, leaving my sword upon the table, to assist, as they said, those who should come in the morning to look for me, in fighting against the ghosts. They then led me through many narrow passages, cut, as I fancied, in the walls, for I had never seen them before, and down several flights of steps, till we came to the vaults underneath the castle; and then opening a stone door, which I should have taken for the wall itself, we went through a long passage, and down other steps cut in the solid rock, when another door delivered us into a cave. After turning and twining about, for some time, we reached the mouth of it, and I found myself on the sea-beach at the foot of the cliffs, with the chateau above. A boat was in waiting, into which the ruf-
fians

fians got, forcing me along with them, and we soon reached a small vessel, that was at anchor, where other men appeared, when setting me aboard, two of the fellows who had seized me, followed, and the other two rowed back to the shore, while we set sail. I soon found out what all this meant, and what was the business of these men at the chateau. We landed in Roussillon, and, after lingering several days about the shore, some of their comrades came down from the mountains, and carried me with them to the fort, where I remained till my Lord so unexpectedly arrived, for they had taken good care to prevent my running away, having blindfolded me, during the journey, and, if they had not done this, I think I never could have found my road to any town, through the wild country we traversed. After I reached the fort I was watched like a prisoner, and never suffered to go out, without two or three companions, and I became so weary of life, that I often wished to get rid of it."

blow

P 5

" Well,

“ Well, but they let you talk,” said Annette, “ they did not gag you after they got you away from the chateau, so I don’t see what reason there was to be so very weary of living ; to say nothing about the chance you had of seeing me again.”

Ludovico smiled, and Emily also, who enquired what was the motive of these men for carrying him off.

“ I soon found out, madam,” resumed Ludovico, “ that they were pirates, who had, during many years, secreted their spoil in the vaults of the castle, which, being so near the sea, suited their purpose well. To prevent detection they had tried to have it believed, that the chateau was haunted, and, having discovered the private way to the north apartments, which had been shut up ever since the death of the lady marchioness, they easily succeeded. The house-keeper and her husband, who were the only persons, that had inhabited the castle, for some years, were so terrified by the strange noises they heard in the nights, that they
would

would live there no longer ; a report soon went abroad, that it was haunted, and the whole country believed this the more readily, I suppose, because it had been said, that the lady marchioness had died in a strange way, and because my lord never would return to the place afterwards."

" But why," said Emily, " were not these pirates contented with the cave—why did they think it necessary to deposit their spoil in the castle ?"

" The cave, madam," replied Ludovico, " was open to any body, and their treasures would not long have remained undiscovered there, but in the vaults they were secure so long as the report prevailed of their being haunted. Thus then, it appears, that they brought at midnight, the spoil they took on the seas, and kept it till they had opportunities of disposing of it to advantage. The pirates were connected with Spanish smugglers and banditti, who live among the wilds of the Pyrenées, and carry on various kinds of traffic, such as nobody would think

of; and with this desperate horde of banditti remained, till my lord arrived. I shall never forget what I felt, when I first discovered him—I almost gave him up for lost! but I knew, that, if I shewed myself, the banditti would discover who he was, and probably murder us all, to prevent their secret in the chateau being detected. I, therefore, kept out of my lord's sight, but had a strict watch upon the ruffians, and determined, if they offered him or his family violence, to discover myself, and fight for our lives. Soon after, I overheard some of them laying a most diabolical plan for the murder and plunder of the whole party, when I contrived to speak to some of my lord's attendants, telling them what was going forward, and we consulted what was best to be done; meanwhile my lord, alarmed at the absence of the Lady Blanche, demanded her, and the ruffians having given some unsatisfactory answer, my lord and Monf. St. Foix became furious, so then we thought it a good time to discover

the plot, and rushing into the chamber, I called out "Treachery! my lord count, defend yourself!" His lordship and the chevalier drew their swords directly, and a hard battle we had, but we conquered at last, as, madam, you are already informed of by my lord count."

"This is an extraordinary adventure," said Emily, "and much praise is due, Ludovico, to your prudence and intrepidity. There are some circumstances, however, concerning the north apartments, which still perplex me; but, perhaps, you may be able to explain them. Did you ever hear the banditti relate any thing extraordinary of these rooms?"

"No, madam," replied Ludovico, "I never heard them speak about the rooms, except to laugh at the credulity of the old housekeeper, who once was very near catching one of the pirates; it was since the Count arrived at the chateau, he said, and he laughed heartily as he related the trick he had played off."

A blush

A blush overspread Emily's cheek, and she impatiently desired Ludovico to explain himself.

"Why, my lady," said he, "as this fellow was, one night, in the bed-room, he heard somebody approaching through the next apartment, and not having time to lift up the arras, and unfasten the door, he hid himself in the bed just by. There he lay for some time in as great a fright, I suppose——"

"As you was in," interrupted Annette, "when you sat up so boldly to watch by yourself."

"Aye," said Ludovico, "in as great a fright as he ever made any body else suffer; and presently the housekeeper and some other person came up to the bed, when he, thinking they were going to examine it, bethought him, that his only chance of escaping detection, was by terrifying them; so he lifted up the counterpane, but that did not do, till he raised his face above it, and then they both set off, he said, as if
they

they had seen the devil, and he got out of the rooms undiscovered."

Emily could not forbear smiling at this explanation of the deception, which had given her so much superstitious terror, and was surprised, that she could have suffered herself to be thus alarmed, till she considered, that, when the mind has once begun to yield to the weakness of superstition, trifles impress it with the force of conviction. Still, however, she remembered with awe the mysterious music, which had been heard, at midnight, near Chateau-le-Blanc, and she asked Ludovico if he could give any explanation of it; but he could not.

"I only know, madam," he added, "that it did not belong to the pirates, for I have heard them laugh about it, and say, they believed the devil was in league with them there."

"Yes, I will answer for it he was," said Annette, her countenance brightening, "I was sure all along, that he or his spirits had
had

had something to do with the north apartments, and now you see, madam, I am right at last."

"It cannot be denied, that his spirits were very busy in that part of the chateau," replied Emily, smiling. "But I am surprised, Ludovico, that these pirates should persevere in their schemes, after the arrival of the Count; what could they expect but certain detection?"

"I have reason to believe, madam," replied Ludovico, "that it was their intention to persevere no longer than was necessary for the removal of the stores, which were deposited in the vaults; and it appeared that they had been employed in doing so from within a short period after the Count's arrival; but, as they had only a few hours in the night for this business, and were carrying on other schemes at the same time, the vaults were not above half emptied, when they took me away. They gloried exceedingly in this opportunity of confirming the superstitious reports, that had
been

been spread of the north chambers, were careful to leave every thing there as they had found it, the better to promote the deception, and frequently in their jocular moods, would laugh at the consternation, which they believed the inhabitants of the castle had suffered upon my disappearing; and it was to prevent the possibility of my betraying their secret, that they had removed me to such a distance. From that period they considered the chateau as nearly their own; but I found from the discourse of their comrades, that, though they were cautious, at first, in shewing their power there, they had once very nearly betrayed themselves. Going, one night, as was their custom, to the north chambers to repeat the noises, that had occasioned such alarm among the servants, they heard, as they were about to unfasten the secret door, voices in the bedroom. My lord has since told me, that himself and M. Henri were then in the apartment, and they heard very extraordinary sounds of lamentation, which it seems

were

were made by these fellows, with their usual design of spreading terror ; and my lord has owned, he then felt somewhat more, than surprise ; but, as it was necessary to the peace of his family, that no notice should be taken, he was silent on the subject, and enjoined silence to his son."

Emily, recollecting the change, that had appeared in the spirits of the Count, after the night, when he had watched in the north room, now perceived the cause of it ; and, having made some further enquiries upon this strange affair, she dismissed Ludovico, and went to give orders for the accommodation of her friends, on the following day.

In the evening, Theresa, lame as she was, came to deliver the ring, with which Valancourt had entrusted her, and, when she presented it, Emily was much affected, for she remembered to have seen him wear it often in happier days. She was, however, much displeased, that Theresa had received it, and positively refused to accept it herself,

self, though to have done so would have afforded her a melancholy pleasure. Theresa entreated, expostulated, and then described the distress of Valancourt, when he had given the ring, and repeated the message, with which he had commissioned her to deliver it; and Emily could not conceal the extreme sorrow this recital occasioned her, but wept, and remained lost in thought.

“Alas! my dear young lady!” said Theresa, “why should all this be? I have known you from your infancy, and it may well be supposed I love you, as if you was my own, and wish as much to see you happy. M. Valancourt, to be sure, I have not known so long, but then I have reason to love him, as though he was my own son. I know how well you love one another, or why all this weeping and wailing?” Emily waved her hand for Theresa to be silent, who, disregarding the signal, continued, “And how much you are alike in your tempers and ways, and, that, if you were married,

married, you would be the happiest couple in the whole province—then what is there to prevent your marrying ? Dear dear ! to see how some people fling away their happiness, and then cry and lament about it, just as if it was not their own doing, and as if there was more pleasure in wailing and weeping, than in being at peace. Learning, to be sure, is a fine thing, but, if it teaches folks no better than that, why I had rather be without it ; if it would teach them to be happier, I would say something to it, then it would be learning and wisdom too.”

Age and long services had given Theresa a privilege to talk, but Emily now endeavoured to check her loquacity, and, though she felt the justness of some of her remarks, did not choose to explain the circumstances, that had determined her conduct towards Valancourt. She, therefore, only told Theresa, that it would much displease her to hear the subject renewed ; that she had reasons for

for her conduct, which she did not think it proper to mention, and that the ring must be returned, with an assurance, that she could not accept it with propriety; and, at the same time, she forbade Theresa to repeat any future message from Valancourt, as she valued her esteem and kindness. Theresa was afflicted, and made another attempt, though feeble, to interest her for Valancourt, but the unusual displeasure, expressed in Emily's countenance, soon obliged her to desist, and she departed in wonder and lamentation.

To relieve her mind, in some degree, from the painful recollections, that intruded upon it, Emily busied herself in preparations for the journey into Languedoc, and, while Annette, who assisted her, spoke with joy and affection of the safe return of Ludovico, she was considering how she might best promote their happiness, and determined, if it appeared, that his affection was as unchanged as that of the simple and honest Annette, to give her a marriage portion,
and

and settle them on some part of her estate. These considerations led her to the remembrance of her father's paternal domain, which his affairs had formerly compelled him to dispose of to M. Quesnel, and which she frequently wished to regain, because St. Aubert had lamented, that the chief lands of his ancestors had passed into another family, and because they had been his birth-place and the haunt of his early years. To the estate at Tholouse she had no peculiar attachment, and it was her wish to dispose of this, that she might purchase her paternal domains, if M. Quesnel could be prevailed on to part with them, which, as he talked much of living in Italy, did not appear very improbable.

C H A P. XV.

“ Sweet is the breath of vernal shower,
 The bees’ collected treasures sweet,
 Sweet music’s melting fall, but sweeter yet
 The still, small voice of gratitude.”

GRAY.

ON the following day, the arrival of her friend revived the drooping Emily, and La Vallée became once more the scene of social kindness and of elegant hospitality. Illness and the terror she had suffered had stolen from Blanche much of her sprightliness, but all her affectionate simplicity remained, and, though she appeared less blooming, she was not less engaging than before. The unfortunate adventure on the Pyrenées had made the Count very anxious to reach home, and, after little more than a week’s stay at La Vallée, Emily prepared to set out with her friends for Languedoc, assigning the care of her house, during her absence, to Theresa.

On

On the evening, preceding her departure, this old servant brought again the ring of Valancourt, and, with tears, entreated her mistress to receive it, for that she had neither seen, or heard of M. Valancourt, since the night when he delivered it to her. As she said this, her countenance expressed more alarm, than she dared to utter ; but Emily, checking her own propensity to fear, considered, that he had probably returned to the residence of his brother, and, again refusing to accept the ring, bade Theresa preserve it, till she saw him, which, with extreme reluctance, she promised to do.

On the following day, Count De Villefort, with Emily and the Lady Blanche, left La Vallée, and on the ensuing evening arrived at the Chateau-le-Blanc, where the Countess, Henri, and M. Du Pont, whom Emily was surprised to find there, received them with much joy and congratulation. She was concerned to observe, that the Count still encouraged the hopes of his friend, whose countenance declared, that his affection

tion had suffered no abatement from absence; and was much distressed, when, on the second evening after her arrival, the Count, having withdrawn her from the Lady Blanche, with whom she was walking, renewed the subject of M. Du Pont's hopes. The mildness, with which she listened to his intercessions at first, deceiving him, as to her sentiments, he began to believe, that, her affection for Valancourt being overcome, she was, at length, disposed to think favourably of M. Du Pont; and, when she afterwards convinced him of his mistake, he ventured, in the earnestness of his wish to promote what he considered to be the happiness of two persons, whom he so much esteemed, gently to remonstrate with her, on thus suffering an ill-placed affection to poison the happiness of her most valuable years.

Observing her silence and the deep dejection of her countenance, he concluded with saying, "I will not say more now, but I will still believe, my dear Mademoiselle St. Aubert, that you will not always reject a

Vol. IV. Q person,

person, so truly estimable as my friend Du Pont."

He spared her the pain of replying, by leaving her; and she strolled on, somewhat displeased with the Count for having persevered to plead for a suit, which she had repeatedly rejected, and lost amidst the melancholy recollections, which this topic had revived, till she had insensibly reached the borders of the woods, that screened the monastery of St. Clair, when, perceiving how far she had wandered, she determined to extend her walk a little farther, and to enquire after the abbess and some of her friends among the nuns.

Though the evening was now drawing to a close, she accepted the invitation of the friar, who opened the gate, and, anxious to meet some of her old acquaintance, proceeded towards the convent parlour. As she crossed the lawn, that sloped from the front of the monastery towards the sea, she was struck with the picture of repose, exhibited by some monks, sitting in the cloisters, which

which extended under the brow of the woods, that crowned this eminence; where, as they meditated, at this twilight hour, holy subjects, they sometimes suffered their attention to be relieved by the scene before them, nor thought it profane to look at nature, now that it had exchanged the brilliant colours of day for the sober hue of evening. Before the cloisters, however, spread an ancient chesnut, whose ample branches were designed to screen the full magnificence of a scene, that might tempt the wish to worldly pleasures; but still, beneath the dark and spreading foliage, gleamed a wide extent of ocean, and many a passing sail; while, to the right and left, thick woods were seen stretching along the winding shores. So much as this had been admitted, perhaps, to give to the secluded votary an image of the dangers and vicissitudes of life, and to console him, now that he had renounced its pleasures, by the certainty of having escaped its evils. As Emily walked

penfively along, confidering how much fuffering ſhe might have eſcaped, had ſhe become a votareſs of the order, and remained in this retirement from the time of her father's death, the veſper-bell ſtruck up, and the monks retired ſlowly toward the chapel, while ſhe, purſuing her way, entered the great hall, where an unuſual ſilence ſeemed to reign. The parlour too, which opened from it, ſhe found vacant, but, as the evening bell was ſounding, ſhe believed the nuns had withdrawn into the chapel, and ſat down to reſt for a moment, before ſhe returned to the chateau, where, however, the increaſing gloom made her now anxious to be.

Not many minutes had elapſed, before a nun, entering in haſte, enquired for the abbefs, and was retiring, without recollecting Emily, when ſhe made herſelf known, and then learned, that a maſs was going to be performed for the ſoul of ſiſter Agnes, who had been declining, for ſome time, and who was now believed to be dying.

Of

Of her sufferings the sister gave a melancholy account; and of the horrors, into which she had frequently started, but which had now yielded to a dejection so gloomy, that neither the prayers, in which she was joined by the sisterhood, or the assurances of her confessor, had power to recall her from it, or to cheer her mind even with a momentary gleam of comfort.

To this relation Emily listened with extreme concern, and, recollecting the phrensed manners and the expressions of horror, which she had herself witnessed of Agnes, together with the history, that sister Frances had communicated, her compassion was heightened to a very painful degree. As the evening was already far advanced, Emily did not now desire to see her, or to join in the mass, and, after leaving many kind remembrances with the nun, for her old friends, she quitted the monastery, and returned over the cliffs toward the chateau, meditating upon what she had just heard, till at length

she forced her mind upon less interesting subjects.

The wind was high, and as she drew near the chateau, she often paused to listen to its awful sound, as it swept over the billows, that beat below, or groaned along the surrounding woods; and, while she rested on a cliff at a short distance from the chateau, and looked upon the wide waters, seen dimly beneath the last shade of twilight, she thought of the following address

TO THE WINDS.

Viewless, through heaven's vast vault your course
ye steer,
Unknown from whence ye come, or whither go!
Mysterious pow'rs! I hear ye murmur low,
Till swells your loud gust on my startled ear,
And, awful! seems to say—some God is near!
I love to list your midnight voices float
In the dread storm, that o'er the ocean rolls,
And, while their charm the angry wave controuls,
Mix with its fullen roar, and sink remote.
Then, rising in the pause, a sweeter note,
The dirge of spirits, who your deeds bewail,
A sweeter note oft swells while sleeps the gale!

But

But soon, ye fightless pow'rs! your rest is o'er,
 Solemn and slow, ye rise upon the air,
 Speak in the shrouds, and bid the sea-boy fear,
 And the faint-warbled dirge—is heard no more!

Oh! then I deprecate your awful reign!
 The loud lament yet bear not on your breath!
 Bear not the crash of bark far on the main,
 Bear not the cry of men, who cry in vain,
 The crew's dread chorus sinking into death!
 Oh! give not these, ye pow'rs! I ask alone,
 As rapt I climb these dark romantic steep,
 The elemental war, the billow's moan;
 I ask the still, sweet tear, that list'ning Fancy weeps!

CHAP. XVI.

..... " Unnatural deeds
 Do breed unnatural troubles : infected minds
 To their deaf pillows will discharge their secrets.
 More needs she the divine, than the physician."

MACBETH.

ON the following evening, the view of the convent towers, rising among the shadowy woods, reminded Emily of the nun, whose condition had so much affected her ; and, anxious to know how she was, as well as to see some of her former friends, she and the Lady Blanche extended their walk to the monastery. At the gate stood a carriage, which, from the heat of the horses, appeared to have just arrived ; but a more than common stillness pervaded the court and the cloisters, through which Emily and Blanche passed in their way to the great hall, where a nun, who was crossing to the stair-case, replied to the enquiries of the former,

former, that sister Agnes was still living, and sensible, but that it was thought she could not survive the night. In the parlour, they found several of the boarders, who rejoiced to see Emily, and told her many little circumstances that had happened in the convent since her departure, and which were interesting to her only because they related to persons, whom she had regarded with affection. While they thus conversed, the abbess entered the room, and expressed much satisfaction at seeing Emily, but her manner was unusually solemn, and her countenance dejected. "Our house," said she, after the first salutations were over, "is truly a house of mourning—a daughter is now paying the debt of nature.—You have heard, perhaps, that our daughter Agnes is dying?"

Emily expressed her sincere concern.

"Here death presents to us a great and awful lesson," continued the abbess; "let us read it, and profit by it; let it teach us to prepare ourselves for the change, that

awaits us all ! You are young, and have it yet in your power to secure “ the peace that passeth all understanding ”—the peace of conscience. Preserve it in your youth, that it may comfort you in age ; for vain, alas ! and imperfect are the good deeds of our latter years, if those of our early life have been evil ! ”

Emily would have said, that good deeds, she hoped, were never vain ; but she considered that it was the abbess who spoke, and she remained silent.

“ The latter days of Agnes,” resumed the abbess, “ have been exemplary ; would they might atone for the errors of her former ones ! Her sufferings now, alas ! are great ; let us believe, that they will make her peace hereafter ! I have left her with her confessor, and a gentleman, whom she has long been anxious to see, and who is just arrived from Paris. They, I hope, will be able to administer the repose, which her mind has hitherto wanted.”

Emily fervently joined in the wish.

“ During

“ During her illness, she has sometimes named you,” resumed the abbess; “ perhaps, it would comfort her to see you; when her present visitors have left her, we will go to her chamber, if the scene will not be too melancholy for your spirits. But, indeed, to such scenes, however painful, we ought to accustom ourselves, for they are salutary to the soul, and prepare us for what we are ourselves to suffer.”

Emily became grave and thoughtful; for this conversation brought to her recollection the dying moments of her beloved father, and she wished once more to weep over the spot, where his remains were buried. During the silence, which followed the abbess’s speech, many minute circumstances attending his last hours occurred to her—his emotion on perceiving himself to be in the neighbourhood of Chateau-le-Blanc—his request to be interred in a particular spot in the church of this monastery—and the solemn charge he had delivered her to destroy certain papers, without examining them.—

She recollected also the mysterious and horrible words in those manuscripts, upon which her eye had involuntarily glanced; and, though they now, and, indeed, whenever she remembered them, revived an excess of painful curiosity, concerning their full import, and the motives for her father's command, it was ever her chief consolation, that she had strictly obeyed him in this particular.

Little more was said by the abbess, who appeared too much affected by the subject she had lately left, to be willing to converse, and her companions had been for some time silent from the same cause, when this general reverie was interrupted by the entrance of a stranger, Monsieur Bonnac, who had just quitted the chamber of sister Agnes. He appeared much disturbed, but Emily fancied, that his countenance had more the expression of horror, than of grief. Having drawn the abbess to a distant part of the room, he conversed with her for some time, during which she seemed

to listen with earnest attention, and he to speak with caution, and a more than common degree of interest. When he had concluded, he bowed silently to the rest of the company, and quitted the room. The abbess, soon after, proposed going to the chamber of sister Agnes, to which Emily consented, though not without some reluctance, and Lady Blanche remained with the boarders below.

At the door of the chamber they met the confessor, whom, as he lifted up his head on their approach, Emily observed to be the same that had attended her dying father; but he passed on, without noticing her, and they entered the apartment, where, on a mattress, was laid sister Agnes, with one nun watching in the chair beside her. Her countenance was so much changed, that Emily would scarcely have recollected her, had she not been prepared to do so: it was ghastly, and overspread with gloomy horror; her dim and hollow eyes were fixed on a crucifix, which she held upon her bosom;

bosom; and she was so much engaged in thought, as not to perceive the abbess and Emily, till they stood at the bed-side. Then, turning her heavy eyes, she fixed them, in wild horror, upon Emily; and, screaming, exclaimed, “Ah! that vision comes upon me in my dying hours!”

Emily started back in terror, and looked for explanation to the abbess, who made her a signal not to be alarmed, and calmly said to Agnes, “Daughter, I have brought Mademoiselle St. Aubert to visit you: I thought you would be glad to see her.”

Agnes made no reply; but, still gazing wildly upon Emily, exclaimed, “It is her very self! Oh! there is all that fascination in her look, which proved my destruction! What would you have—what is it you come to demand—Retribution?—It will soon be yours—it is yours already. How many years have passed, since last I saw you! My crime is but as yesterday.—Yet I am grown old beneath it; while you are still young and blooming—blooming as
when

when you forced me to commit that most abhorred deed ! O ! could I once forget it ! —yet what would that avail ? —the deed is done !”

Emily, extremely shocked, would now have left the room ; but the abbess, taking her hand, tried to support her spirits, and begged she would stay a few moments, when Agnes would probably be calm, whom now she tried to sooth. But the latter seemed to disregard her, while she still fixed her eyes on Emily, and added, “ What are years of prayers and repentance ? they cannot wash out the foulness of murder ! —Yes, murder ! Where is he — where is he ? — Look there — look there ! — see where he stalks along the room ! Why do you come to torment me now ? ” continued Agnes, while her straining eyes were bent on air, “ why was not I punished before ? — O ! do not frown so sternly ! Hah ! there again ! ’tis she herself ! Why do you look so pitifully upon me — and smile, too ? smile on me ! What groan was that ? ”

Agnes

Agnes sunk down, apparently lifeless, and Emily, unable to support herself, leaned against the bed, while the abbess and the attendant nun were applying the usual remedies to Agnes. "Peace," said the abbess, when Emily was going to speak, "the delirium is going off, she will soon revive. When was she thus before, daughter?"

"Not of many weeks, madam," replied the nun, "but her spirits have been much agitated by the arrival of the gentleman she wished so much to see."

"Yes," observed the abbess, "that has undoubtedly occasioned this paroxysm of phrensy. When she is better, we will leave her to repose."

Emily very readily consented, but, though she could now give little assistance, she was unwilling to quit the chamber, while any might be necessary.

When Agnes recovered her senses, she again fixed her eyes on Emily, but their wild expression was gone, and a gloomy melancholy

lancholy had succeeded. It was some moments before she recovered sufficient spirits to speak; she then said feebly—"The likeness is wonderful!—surely it must be something more than fancy. Tell me, I conjure you," she added, addressing Emily, "though your name is St. Aubert, are you not the daughter of the Marchioness?" "What Marchioness?" said Emily, in extreme surprise; for she had imagined, from the calmness of Agnes's manner, that her intellects were restored. The abbess gave her a significant glance, but she repeated the question.

"What Marchioness?" exclaimed Agnes, "I know but of one—the Marchioness de Villeroi."

Emily, remembering the emotion of her late father, upon the unexpected mention of this lady, and his request to be laid near the tomb of the Villerois, now felt greatly interested, and she entreated Agnes to explain the reason of her question. The abbess would now have withdrawn Emily from

from the room, who being, however, detained by a strong interest, repeated her entreaties.

“ Bring me that casket, sister,” said Agnes; “ I will shew her to you; yet you need only look at that mirror, and you will behold her; you surely are her daughter: such striking resemblance is never found but among near relations.”

The nun brought the casket, and Agnes, having directed her how to unlock it, she took thence a miniature, in which Emily perceived the exact resemblance of the picture, which she had found among her late father’s papers. Agnes held out her hand to receive it; gazed upon it earnestly for some moments in silence; and then, with a countenance of deep despair, threw up her eyes to Heaven, and prayed inwardly. When she had finished, she returned the miniature to Emily. “ Keep it,” said she, I bequeath it to you, for I must believe it is your right. I have frequently observed the resemblance between you; but never, till this day,

day, did it strike upon my conscience so powerfully ! Stay, sister, do not remove the casket—there is another picture I would shew.”

Emily trembled with expectation, and the abbess again would have withdrawn her. “ Agnes is still disordered,” said she, “ you observe how she wanders. In these moods she says any thing, and does not scruple, as you have witnessed, to accuse herself of the most horrible crimes.”

Emily, however, thought she perceived something more than madness in the inconsistencies of Agnes, whose mention of the Marchioness, and production of her picture, had interested her so much, that she determined to obtain further information, if possible, respecting the subject of it.

The nun returned with the casket, and, Agnes pointing out to her a secret drawer, she took from it another miniature. “ Here,” said Agnes, as she offered it to Emily, “ learn a lesson for your vanity, at least ; look well at this picture, and see if you can discover

discover

discover any resemblance between what I was, and what I am."

Emily impatiently received the miniature, which her eyes had scarcely glanced upon, before her trembling hands had nearly suffered it to fall—it was the resemblance of the portrait of Signora Laurentini, which she had formerly seen in the castle of Udolpho—the lady, who had disappeared in so mysterious a manner, and whom Montoni had been suspected of having caused to be murdered.

In silent astonishment, Emily continued to gaze alternately upon the picture and the dying nun, endeavouring to trace a resemblance between them, which no longer existed.

"Why do you look so sternly on me?" said Agnes, mistaking the nature of Emily's emotion.

"I have seen this face before," said Emily, at length; "was it really your resemblance?"

"You may well ask that question," replied

plied the nun,—“but it was once esteemed a striking likeness of me. Look at me well, and see what guilt has made me. I then was innocent; the evil passions of my nature slept. Sister!” added she solemnly, and stretching forth her cold, damp hand to Emily, who shuddered at its touch—“Sister! beware of the first indulgence of the passions; beware of the first! Their course, if not checked then, is rapid—their force is uncontrollable—they lead us we know not whither—they lead us perhaps to the commission of crimes, for which whole years of prayer and penitence cannot atone!—Such may be the force of even a single passion, that it overcomes every other, and sears up every other approach to the heart. Possessing us like a fiend, it leads us on to the acts of a fiend, making us insensible to pity and to conscience. And, when its purpose is accomplished, like a fiend, it leaves us to the torture of those feelings, which its power had suspended—not annihilated,—to
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the tortures of compassion, remorse, and conscience. Then, we awaken as from a dream, and perceive a new world around us—we gaze in astonishment, and horror—but the deed is committed; not all the powers of heaven and earth united can undo it—and the spectres of conscience will not fly! What are riches—grandeur—health itself, to the luxury of a pure conscience, the health of the soul;—and what the sufferings of poverty, disappointment, despair—to the anguish of an afflicted one! O! how long is it since I knew that luxury! I believed, that I had suffered the most agonizing pangs of human nature, in love, jealousy and despair—but these pangs were ease, compared with the stings of conscience, which I have since endured. I tasted too what was called the sweet of revenge—but it was transient, it expired even with the object, that provoked it. Remember, sister, that the passions are the seeds of vices as well as of virtues, from which either may spring, accordingly

cordingly as they are nurtured. Unhappy they who have never been taught the art to govern them !”

“ Alas ! unhappy !” said the abbess, “ and ill-informed of our holy religion !” Emily listened to Agnes, in silent awe, while she still examined the miniature, and became confirmed in her opinion of its strong resemblance to the portrait at Udolpho. “ This face is familiar to me,” said she, wishing to lead the nun to an explanation, yet fearing to discover too abruptly her knowledge of Udolpho.

“ You are mistaken,” replied Agnes, “ you certainly never saw that picture before.”

“ No,” replied Emily, “ but I have seen one extremely like it.” “ Impossible,” said Agnes, who may now be called the Lady Laurentini.

“ It was in the castle of Udolpho,” continued Emily, looking stedfastly at her.

“ Of Udolpho !” exclaimed Laurentini,
“ of

“of Udolpho in Italy!” “The same,” replied Emily.

“You know me then,” said Laurentini, “and you are the daughter of the Marchioness.” Emily was somewhat surprised at this abrupt assertion. “I am the daughter of the late Mons. St. Aubert,” said she; “and the lady you name is an utter stranger to me.”

“At least you believe so,” rejoined Laurentini.

Emily asked what reasons there could be to believe otherwise.

“The family likeness, that you bear her,” said the nun. “The Marchioness, it is known, was attached to a gentleman of Gascony, at the time when she accepted the hand of the Marquis, by the command of her father. Ill-fated, unhappy woman!”

Emily, remembering the extreme emotion which St. Aubert had betrayed on the mention of the Marchioness, would now have suffered something more than surprise,

had her confidence in his integrity been less; as it was, she could not, for a moment, believe what the words of Laurentini insinuated; yet she still felt strongly interested, concerning them, and begged, that she would explain them further.

“Do not urge me on that subject,” said the nun, “it is to me a terrible one! Would that I could blot it from my memory!” She sighed deeply, and, after the pause of a moment, asked Emily, by what means she had discovered her name?

“By your portrait in the castle of Udolpho, to which this miniature bears a striking resemblance,” replied Emily.

“You have been at Udolpho, then!” said the nun, with great emotion. “Alas! what scenes does the mention of it revive in my fancy—scenes of happiness—of suffering—and of horror!”

At this moment, the terrible spectacle, which Emily had witnessed in a chamber of that castle, occurred to her, and she shuddered, while she looked upon the nun—

and recollected her late words—that “years of prayer and penitence could not wash out the foulness of murder.” She was now compelled to attribute these to another cause, than that of delirium. With a degree of horror, that almost deprived her of sense, she now believed she looked upon a murderer; all the recollected behaviour of Laurentini seemed to confirm the supposition, yet Emily was still lost in a labyrinth of perplexities, and, not knowing how to ask the questions, which might lead to truth, she could only hint them in broken sentences.

“Your sudden departure from Udolpho”—said she.

Laurentini groaned.

“The reports that followed it,” continued Emily—“The west chamber—the mourning veil—the object it conceals!—when murders are committed—”

The nun shrieked, “What! there again!” said she, endeavouring to raise herself, while her starting eyes seemed to follow some object

object round the room—"Come from the grave! What! Blood—blood too!—There was no blood—thou canst not say it!—Nay, do not smile,—do not smile so piteously!"

Laurentini fell into convulsions, as she uttered the last words; and Emily, unable any longer to endure the horror of the scene, hurried from the room, and sent some nuns to the assistance of the abbess.

The Lady Blanche, and the boarders, who were in the parlour, now assembled round Emily, and, alarmed by her manner and affrighted countenance, asked a hundred questions, which she avoided answering further, than by saying, that she believed sister Agnes was dying. They received this as a sufficient explanation of her terror, and had then leisure to offer restoratives, which, at length, somewhat revived Emily, whose mind was, however, so much shocked with terrible surmises, and perplexed with doubts by some words from the nun, that she was

unable to converse, and would have left the convent immediately, had she not wished to know whether Laurentini would survive the late attack. After waiting some time, she was informed, that, the convulsions having ceased, Laurentini seemed to be reviving, and Emily and Blanche were departing, when the abbess appeared, who, drawing the former aside, said she had something of consequence to say to her, but, as it was late, she would not detain her then, and requested to see her on the following day.

Emily promised to visit her, and, having taken leave, returned with the Lady Blanche towards the chateau, on the way to which the deep gloom of the woods made Blanche lament that the evening was so far advanced; for the surrounding stillness and obscurity rendered her sensible of fear, though there was a servant to protect her; while Emily was too much engaged by the horrors of the scene she had just witnessed, to be affected by the solemnity of the shades, otherwise
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than as they served to promote her gloomy reverie, from which, however, she was at length recalled by the Lady Blanche, who pointed out, at some distance, in the dusky path they were winding, two persons slowly advancing. It was impossible to avoid them without striking into a still more secluded part of the wood, whither the strangers might easily follow; but all apprehension vanished, when Emily distinguished the voice of *Monf. Du Pont*, and perceived, that his companion was the gentleman, whom she had seen at the monastery, and who was now conversing with so much earnestness as not immediately to perceive their approach. When *Du Pont* joined the ladies, the stranger took leave, and they proceeded to the chateau, where the Count, when he heard of *Monf. Bonnac*, claimed him for an acquaintance, and, on learning the melancholy occasion of his visit to *Languedoc*, and that he was lodged at a small inn in the village, begged the favour of

Monf. Du Pont to invite him to the chateau.

The latter was happy to do fo, and the fcruples of refcrve, which made M. Bonnac hesitate to accept the invitation, being at length overcome, they went to the chateau, where the kindnefs of the Count and the fprightlinefs of his fon were exerted to difsipate the gloom, that overhung the fpirits of the ftranger. M. Bonnac was an officer in the French fervice, and appeared to be about fifty; his figure was tall and commanding, his manners had received the laft polifh, and there was fomething in his countenance uncommonly interefting; for over features, which, in youth, muft have been remarkably handsome, was fpread a melancholy, that feemed the effect of long miffortune, rather than of conftitution, or temper.

The converfation he held, during fupper, was evidently an effort of politenefs, and there were intervals in which, unable to
 ftruggle

struggle against the feelings, that depressed him, he relapsed into silence and abstraction, from which, however, the Count sometimes withdrew him in a manner so delicate and benevolent, that Emily, while she observed him, almost fancied she beheld her late father.

The party separated, at an early hour, and then, in the solitude of her apartment, the scenes, which Emily had lately witnessed, returned to her fancy, with dreadful energy. That in the dying nun she should have discovered Signora Laurentini, who, instead of having been murdered by Montoni, was, as it now seemed, herself guilty of some dreadful crime, excited both horror and surprise in a high degree; nor did the hints, which she had dropped, respecting the marriage of the Marchioness de Villeroy, and the enquiries she had made concerning Emily's birth, occasion her a less degree of interest, though it was of a different nature.

The history, which sister Frances had for-

merly related, and had said to be that of Agnes, it now appeared, was erroneous; but for what purpose it had been fabricated, unless the more effectually to conceal the true story, Emily could not even guess. Above all, her interest was excited as to the relation, which the story of the late Marchioness de Villeroi bore to that of her father; for, that some kind of relation existed between them, the grief of St. Aubert, upon hearing her name, his request to be buried near her, and her picture, which had been found among his papers, certainly proved. Sometimes it occurred to Emily, that he might have been the lover, to whom it was said the Marchioness was attached, when she was compelled to marry the Marquis de Villeroi; but that he had afterwards cherished a passion for her, she could not suffer herself to believe, for a moment. The papers, which he had so solemnly enjoined her to destroy, she now fancied had related to this connection, and she wished more earnestly than before to know the reasons, that

that made him consider the injunction necessary, which, had her faith in his principles been less, would have led to believe, that there was a mystery in her birth dishonourable to her parents, which those manuscripts might have revealed.

Reflections, similar to these, engaged her mind, during the greater part of the night, and when, at length, she fell into a slumber, it was only to behold a vision of the dying nun, and to awaken in horrors, like those she had witnessed.

On the following morning, she was too much indisposed to attend her appointment with the abbess, and, before the day concluded, she heard, that sister Agnes was no more. *Monf. Bonnac* received this intelligence with concern; but *Emily* observed, that he did not appear so much affected now, as on the preceding evening, immediately after quitting the apartment of the nun, whose death was probably less terrible to him, than the confession he had been then called upon to witness. However this

might be, he was perhaps consoled, in some degree, by a knowledge of the legacy bequeathed him, since his family was large, and the extravagance of some part of it had lately been the means of involving him in great distress, and even in the horrors of a prison; and it was the grief he had suffered from the wild career of a favourite son, with the pecuniary anxieties and misfortunes consequent upon it, that had given to his countenance the air of dejection which had so much interested Emily.

To his friend Mons. Du Pont he recited some particulars of his late sufferings, when it appeared, that he had been confined for several months in one of the prisons of Paris, with little hope of release, and without the comfort of seeing his wife, who had been absent in the country, endeavouring, though in vain, to procure assistance from his friends. When, at length, she had obtained an order for admittance, she was so much shocked at the change, which long
 confine-

confinement and sorrow had made in his appearance, that she was seized with fits, which, by their long continuance, threatened her life.

“ Our situation affected those who happened to witness it,” continued Mons. Bonnac, “ and one generous friend, who was in confinement at the same time, afterwards employed the first moments of his liberty in efforts to obtain mine. He succeeded: the heavy debt, that oppressed me, was discharged; and, when I would have expressed my sense of the obligation I had received, my benefactor was fled from my search. I have reason to believe he was the victim of his own generosity, and that he returned to the state of confinement from which he had released me; but every enquiry after him was unsuccessful. Amiable and unfortunate Valancourt!”

“ Valancourt!” exclaimed Mons. Du Pont. “ Of what family?”

“ The Valancourts, Counts Duvarney,” replied Mons. Bonnac.

The emotion of Mons. Du Pont, when he discovered the generous benefactor of his friend to be the rival of his love, can only be imagined; but, having overcome his first surprise, he dissipated the apprehensions of Mons. Bonnac, by acquainting him, that Valancourt was at liberty, and had lately been in Languedoc; after which his affection for Emily prompted him to make some enquiries, respecting the conduct of his rival, during his stay at Paris, of which M. Bonnac appeared to be well informed. The answers he received were such as convinced him, that Valancourt had been much misrepresented, and, painful as was the sacrifice, he formed the just design of relinquishing his pursuit of Emily to a lover, who, it now appeared, was not unworthy of the regard with which she honoured him.

The conversation of Mons. Bonnac discovered, that Valancourt, some time after his arrival at Paris, had been drawn into the snares, which determined vice had spread
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for him, and that his hours had been chiefly divided between the parties of the captivating Marchionefs and those gaming affemblies, to which the envy, or the avarice, of his brother officers had spared no art to seduce him. In these parties he had lost large sums, in efforts to recover small ones, and to such losses the Count de Villefort and M. Henri had been frequent witnesses. His resources were, at length, exhausted ; and the Count, his brother, exasperated by his conduct, refused to continue the supplies necessary to his present mode of life, when Valancourt, in consequence of accumulated debts, was thrown into confinement, where his brother suffered him to remain, in the hope that punishment might effect a reform of conduct, which had not yet been confirmed by long habit.

In the solitude of his prison, Valancourt had leisure for reflection, and cause for repentance ; here, too, the image of Emily, which, amidst the dissipation of the city, had been obscured, but never obliterated from

from his heart, revived with all the charms of innocence and beauty, to reproach him for having sacrificed his happiness and debased his talents by pursuits, which his nobler faculties would formerly have taught him to consider were as tasteless as they were degrading. But, though his passions had been seduced, his heart was not depraved, nor had habit riveted the chains, that hung heavily on his conscience; and, as he retained that energy of will, which was necessary to burst them, he, at length, emancipated himself from the bondage of vice, but not till after much effort and severe suffering.

Being released by his brother from the prison, where he had witnessed the affecting meeting between *Monf. Bonnac* and his wife, with whom he had been for some time acquainted, the first use of his liberty formed a striking instance of his humanity and his rashness; for with nearly all the money, just received from his brother, he went to a gaming-house, and gave it as a last stake
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for the chance of restoring his friend to freedom, and to his afflicted family. The event was fortunate, and, while he had awaited the issue of this momentous stake, he made a solemn vow never again to yield to the destructive and fascinating vice of gaming.

Having restored the venerable *Monf. Bonnac* to his rejoicing family, he hurried from *Paris* to *Estuviere* ; and, in the delight of having made the wretched happy, forgot, for a while, his own misfortunes. Soon, however, he remembered that he had thrown away the fortune, without which he could never hope to marry *Emily* ; and life, unless passed with her, now scarcely appeared supportable ; for her goodness, refinement, and simplicity of heart, rendered her beauty more enchanting, if possible, to his fancy, than it had ever yet appeared. Experience had taught him to understand the full value of the qualities, which he had before admired, but which the contrasted characters he had seen in the world
made

made him now adore ; and these reflections, increasing the pangs of remorse and regret, occasioned the deep dejection, that had accompanied him even into the presence of Emily, of whom he considered himself no longer worthy. To the ignominy of having received pecuniary obligations from the Marchioness Chamfort, or any other lady of intrigue, as the Count de Villefort had been informed, or of having been engaged in the depredating schemes of gamblers, Valancourt had never submitted ; and these were some of such scandals as often mingle with truth, against the unfortunate. Count De Villefort had received them from authority, which he had no reason to doubt, and which the imprudent conduct he had himself witnessed in Valancourt, had certainly induced him the more readily to believe. Being such as Emily could not name to the Chevalier, he had no opportunity of refuting them ; and, when he confessed himself to be unworthy of her esteem, he little suspected, that he was confirming to her the most dread-

dreadful calumnies. Thus the mistake had been mutual, and had remained so, when Mons. Bonnac explained the conduct of his generous, but imprudent young friend to Du Pont, who, with severe justice, determined not only to undeceive the Count on this subject, but to resign all hope of Emily. Such a sacrifice as his love rendered this, was deserving of a noble reward, and Mons. Bonnac, if it had been possible for him to forget the benevolent Valancourt, would have wished that Emily might accept the just Du Pont.

When the Count was informed of the error he had committed, he was extremely shocked at the consequence of his credulity, and the account which Mons. Bonnac gave of his friend's situation, while at Paris, convinced him, that Valancourt had been entrapped by the schemes of a set of dissipated young men, with whom his profession had partly obliged him to associate, rather than by an inclination to vice; and, charmed by the humanity, and noble, though rash
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generosity, which his conduct towards Monf. Bonnac exhibited, he forgave him the transient errors, that had stained his youth, and restored him to the high degree of esteem, with which he had regarded him, during their early acquaintance. But, as the least reparation he could now make Valancourt was to afford him an opportunity of explaining to Emily his former conduct, he immediately wrote, to request his forgiveness of the unintentional injury he had done him, and to invite him to Chateau-le-Blanc. Motives of delicacy withheld the Count from informing Emily of this letter, and of kindness from acquainting her with the discovery respecting Valancourt, till his arrival should save her from the possibility of anxiety, as to its event; and this precaution spared her even severer inquietude than the Count had foreseen, since he was ignorant of the symptoms of despair which Valancourt's late conduct had betrayed.

C H A P. XVII.

. " But in these cases,
 We still have judgment here ; that we but teach
 Bloody instructions, which, being taught, return
 To plague the inventor : thus even-handed justice
 Commends the ingredients of our poison'd chalice
 To our own lips."

MACBETH.

SOME circumstances of an extraordinary nature now withdrew Emily from her own sorrows, and excited emotions, which partook of both surprise and horror.

A few days following that on which Signora Laurentini died her will was opened at the monastery, in the presence of the superiors and Mons. Bonnac, when it was found, that one third of her personal property was bequeathed to the nearest surviving relative of the late Marchioness de Vileroi, and that Emily was the person.

With the secret of Emily's family the abbess had long been acquainted, and it was
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in observance of the earnest request of St. Aubert, who was known to the friar, that attended him on his death-bed, that his daughter had remained in ignorance of her relationship to the Marchioness. But some hints, which had fallen from Signora Laurentini, during her last interview with Emily, and a confession of a very extraordinary nature, given in her dying hours, had made the abbess think it necessary to converse with her young friend on the topic she had not before ventured to introduce ; and it was for this purpose, that she had requested to see her on the morning that followed her interview with the nun. Emily's indisposition had then prevented the intended conversation ; but now, after the will had been examined, she received a summons, which she immediately obeyed, and became informed of circumstances that powerfully affected her. As the narrative of the abbess was, however, deficient in many particulars, of which the reader may wish to be informed, and the history of the nun is materially

terially connected with the fate of the Marchioness de Villeroi, we shall omit the conversation, that passed in the parlour of the convent, and mingle with our relation a brief history of

LAURENTINI DI UDOLPHO,

who was the only child of her parents, and heiress of the ancient house of Udolpho, in the territory of Venice. It was the first misfortune of her life, and that which led to all her succeeding misery, that the friends, who ought to have restrained her strong passions, and mildly instructed her in the art of governing them, nurtured them by early indulgence. But they cherished their own failings in her; for their conduct was not the result of rational kindness, and, when they either indulged, or opposed the passions of their child, they gratified their own. Thus they indulged her with weakness, and reprehended her with violence; her spirit was exasperated by their vehemence, instead of being corrected by their wisdom;

wisdom; and their oppositions became contests for victory, in which the due tenderness of the parents, and the affectionate duties of the child, were equally forgotten; but, as returning fondness disarmed the parents' resentment soonest, Laurentini was suffered to believe that she had conquered, and her passions became stronger by every effort, that had been employed to subdue them.

The death of her father and mother in the same year left her to her own discretion, under the dangerous circumstances attendant on youth and beauty. She was fond of company, delighted with admiration, yet disdainful of the opinion of the world, when it happened to contradict her inclinations; had a gay and brilliant wit, and was mistress of all the arts of fascination. Her conduct was such as might have been expected, from the weakness of her principles and the strength of her passions.

Among her numerous admirers was the late Marquis de Villeroy, who, on his tour
through

through Italy, saw Laurentini at Venice, where she usually resided, and became her passionate adorer. Equally captivated by the figure and accomplishments of the Marquis, who was at that period one of the most distinguished noblemen of the French court, she had the art so effectually to conceal from him the dangerous traits of her character and the blemishes of her late conduct, that he solicited her hand in marriage.

Before the nuptials were concluded, she retired to the castle of Udolpho, whither the Marquis followed, and where her conduct, relaxing from the propriety, which she had lately assumed, discovered to him the precipice, on which he stood. A minuter enquiry than he had before thought it necessary to make, convinced him, that he had been deceived in her character, and she, whom he had designed for his wife, afterwards became his mistress.

Having passed some weeks at Udolpho, he was called abruptly to France, whither
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he returned with extreme reluctance, for his heart was still fascinated by the arts of Laurentini, with whom, however, he had on various pretences delayed his marriage; but, to reconcile her to this separation, he now gave repeated promises of returning to conclude the nuptials, as soon as the affair, which thus suddenly called him to France, should permit.

Soothed, in some degree, by these assurances, she suffered him to depart; and, soon after, her relative, Montoni, arriving at Udolpho, renewed the addresses which she had before refused, and which she now again rejected. Meanwhile, her thoughts were constantly with the Marquis de Ville-roi, for whom she suffered all the delirium of Italian love, cherished by the solitude, to which she confined herself; for she had now lost all taste for the pleasures of society and the gaiety of amusement. Her only indulgences were to sigh and weep over a miniature of the Marquis; to visit the scenes, that had witnessed their happiness;

to pour forth her heart to him in writing, and to count the weeks, the days, which must intervene before the period that he had mentioned as probable for his return. But this period passed without bringing him; and week after week followed in heavy and almost intolerable expectation. During this interval, Laurentini's fancy, occupied incessantly by one idea, became disordered; and, her whole heart being devoted to one object, life became hateful to her, when she believed that object lost.

Several months passed, during which she heard nothing from the Marquis de Ville-roi, and her days were marked, at intervals, with the phrensy of passion and the fullness of despair. She secluded herself from all visitors, and, sometimes, remained in her apartment, for weeks together, refusing to speak to every person, except her favourite female attendant, writing scraps of letters, reading, again and again, those she had received from the Marquis,

weeping over his picture, and speaking to it, for many hours, upbraiding, reproaching and caressing it alternately.

At length, a report reached her, that the Marquis had married in France, and, after suffering all the extremes of love, jealousy and indignation, she formed the desperate resolution of going secretly to that country, and, if the report proved true, of attempting a deep revenge. To her favourite woman only she confided the plan of her journey, and she engaged her to partake of it. Having collected her jewels, which, descending to her from many branches of her family, were of immense value, and all her cash, to a very large amount, they were packed in a trunk, which was privately conveyed to a neighbouring town, whither Laurentini, with this only servant, followed, and thence proceeded secretly to Leghorn, where they embarked for France.

When, on her arrival in Languedoc, she found, that the Marquis de Villeroi had
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been married, for some months, her despair almost deprived her of reason, and she alternately projected and abandoned the horrible design of murdering the Marquis, his wife and herself. At length she contrived to throw herself in his way, with an intention of reproaching him, for his conduct, and of stabbing herself in his presence; but, when she again saw him, who so long had been the constant object of her thoughts and affections, resentment yielded to love; her resolution failed; she trembled with the conflict of emotions, that assailed her heart, and fainted away.

The Marquis was not proof against her beauty and sensibility; all the energy, with which he had first loved, returned, for his passion had been resisted by prudence, rather than overcome by indifference; and, since the honour of his family would not permit him to marry her, he had endeavoured to subdue his love, and had so far succeeded, as to select the then Marchioness for his wife, whom he loved at first with a

tempered and rational affection. But the mild virtues of that amiable lady did not recompense him for her indifference, which appeared, notwithstanding her efforts to conceal it; and he had, for some time, suspected that her affections were engaged by another person, when Laurentini arrived in Languedoc. This artful Italian soon perceived, that she had regained her influence over him, and, soothed by the discovery, she determined to live, and to employ all her enchantments to win his consent to the diabolical deed, which she believed was necessary to the security of her happiness. She conducted her scheme with deep dissimulation and patient perseverance, and, having completely estranged the affections of the Marquis from his wife, whose gentle goodness and unimpassioned manners had ceased to please, when contrasted with the captivations of the Italian, she proceeded to awaken in his mind the jealousy of pride, for it was no longer that of love, and even pointed out to him the person, to whom she

she affirmed the Marchioness had sacrificed her honour ; but Laurentini had first extorted from him a solemn promise to forbear avenging himself upon his rival. This was an important part of her plan, for she knew, that, if his desire of vengeance was restrained towards one party, it would burn more fiercely towards the other, and he might then, perhaps, be prevailed on to assist in the horrible act, which would release him from the only barrier, that withheld him from making her his wife.

The innocent Marchioness, meanwhile, observed, with extreme grief, the alteration in her husband's manners. He became reserved and thoughtful in her presence ; his conduct was austere, and sometimes even rude ; and he left her, for many hours together, to weep for his unkindness, and to form plans for the recovery of his affection. His conduct afflicted her the more, because, in obedience to the command of her father, she had accepted his hand, though her affections were engaged to ano-

ther, whose amiable disposition, she had reason to believe, would have ensured her happiness. This circumstance Laurentini had discovered, soon after her arrival in France, and had made ample use of it in assisting her designs upon the Marquis, to whom she adduced such seeming proof of his wife's infidelity, that, in the frantic rage of wounded honour, he consented to destroy his wife. A slow poison was administered, and she fell a victim to the jealousy and subtlety of Laurentini and to the guilty weakness of her husband.

But the moment of Laurentini's triumph, the moment, to which she had looked forward for the completion of all her wishes, proved only the commencement of a suffering, that never left her to her dying hour.

The passion of revenge, which had in part stimulated her to the commission of this atrocious deed, died, even at the moment when it was gratified, and left her to the horrors of unavailing pity and remorse, which would probably have empoisoned all the
years

years she had promised herself with the Marquis de Villeroi, had her expectations of an alliance with him been realized. But he, too, had found the moment of his revenge to be that of remorse, as to himself, and detestation, as to the partner of his crime; the feeling, which he had mistaken for conviction, was no more; and he stood astonished, and aghast, that no proof remained of his wife's infidelity, now that she had suffered the punishment of guilt. Even when he was informed, that she was dying, he had felt suddenly and unaccountably reassured of her innocence, nor was the solemn assurance she made him in her last hour, capable of affording him a stronger conviction of her blameless conduct.

In the first horrors of remorse and despair, he felt inclined to deliver up himself and the woman, who had plunged him into this abyss of guilt, into the hands of justice; but, when the paroxysm of his suffering was over, his intention changed. Laurentini, however, he saw only once afterwards, and

that was, to curse her as the instigator of his crime, and to say, that he spared her life only on condition, that she passed the rest of her days in prayer and penance. Overwhelmed with disappointment, on receiving contempt and abhorrence from the man, for whose sake she had not scrupled to stain her conscience with human blood, and, touched with horror of the unavailing crime she had committed, she renounced the world, and retired to the monastery of St. Claire, a dreadful victim to unresisted passion.

The Marquis, immediately after the death of his wife, quitted Chateau-le-Blanc, to which he never returned, and endeavoured to lose the sense of his crime amidst the tumult of war, or the dissipations of a capital; but his efforts were vain; a deep dejection hung over him ever after, for which his most intimate friends could not account, and he, at length, died, with a degree of horror nearly equal to that, which Laurentini had suffered. The physician, who had observed the singular appearance of the unfortunate

fortunate Marchioness, after death, had been bribed to silence; and, as the surmises of a few of the servants had proceeded no further than a whisper, the affair had never been investigated. Whether this whisper ever reached the father of the Marchioness, and, if it did, whether the difficulty of obtaining proof deterred him from prosecuting the Marquis de Villeroi, is uncertain; but her death was deeply lamented by some part of her family, and particularly by her brother, M. St. Aubert; for that was the degree of relationship, which had existed between Emily's father and the Marchioness; and there is no doubt, that he suspected the manner of her death. Many letters passed between the Marquis and him, soon after the decease of his beloved sister, the subject of which was not known, but there is reason to believe, that they related to the cause of her death; and these were the papers, together with some letters of the Marchioness, who had confided to her brother the occasion of her unhappiness, which St. Aubert had so

solemnly enjoined his daughter to destroy : and anxiety for her peace had probably made him forbid her to enquire into the melancholy story, to which they alluded. Such, indeed, had been his affliction, on the premature death of this his favourite sister, whose unhappy marriage had from the first excited his tenderest pity, that he never could hear her named, or mention her himself after her death, except to Madame St. Aubert. From Emily, whose sensibility he feared to awaken, he had so carefully concealed her history and name, that she was ignorant, till now, that she ever had such a relative as the Marchioness de Villeroi; and from this motive he had enjoined silence to his only surviving sister, Madame Cheron, who had scrupulously observed his request.

It was over some of the last pathetic letters of the Marchioness, that St. Aubert was weeping, when he was observed by Emily, on the eve of her departure from La Vallée, and it was her picture, which he had so tenderly caressed. Her disastrous death may

account

account for the emotion he had betrayed, on hearing her named by La Voisin, and for his request to be interred near the monument of the Villerois, where her remains were deposited, but not those of her husband, who was buried, where he died, in the north of France.

The confessor, who attended St. Aubert in his last moments, recollected him to be the brother of the late Marchioness, when St. Aubert, from tenderness to Emily, had conjured him to conceal the circumstance, and to request that the abbess, to whose care he particularly recommended her, would do the same; a request, which had been exactly observed.

Laurentini, on her arrival in France, had carefully concealed her name and family, and, the better to disguise her real history, had, on entering the convent, caused the story to be circulated, which had imposed on sister Frances, and it is probable, that the abbess, who did not preside in the convent, at the time of her noviciation, was also en-

tirely ignorant of the truth. The deep remorse, that seized on the mind of Laurentini, together with the sufferings of disappointed passion, for she still loved the Marquis, again unsettled her intellects, and, after the first paroxysms of despair were passed, a heavy and silent melancholy had settled upon her spirits, which suffered few interruptions from fits of phrensy, till the time of her death. During many years, it had been her only amusement to walk in the woods near the monastery, in the solitary hours of night, and to play upon a favourite instrument, to which she sometimes joined the delightful melody of her voice, in the most solemn and melancholy airs of her native country, modulated by all the energetic feeling, that dwelt in her heart. The physician, who had attended her, recommended it to the superior to indulge her in this whim, as the only means of soothing her distempered fancy; and she was suffered to walk in the lonely hours of night, attended by the servant, who had accompanied her from Italy; but, as the indulgence transgressed against the rules
of

of the convent, it was kept as secret as possible ; and thus the mysterious music of Laurentini had combined with other circumstances, to produce a report, that not only the chateau, but its neighbourhood, was haunted.

Soon after her entrance into this holy community, and before she had shewn any symptoms of insanity there, she made a will, in which, after bequeathing a considerable legacy to the convent, she divided the remainder of her personal property, which her jewels made very valuable, between the wife of Mons. Bonnac, who was an Italian lady and her relation, and the nearest surviving relative of the late Marchioness de Villeroi. As Emily St. Aubert was not only the nearest, but the sole relative, this legacy descended to her, and thus explained to her the whole mystery of her father's conduct.

The resemblance between Emily and her unfortunate aunt had frequently been observed by Laurentini, and had occasioned
the

the singular behaviour which had formerly alarmed her ; but it was in the nun's dying hour, when her conscience gave her perpetually the idea of the Marchioness, that she became more sensible, than ever, of this likeness, and, in her phrensy, deemed it no resemblance of the person she had injured, but the original herself. The bold assertion, that had followed, on the recovery of her senses, that Emily was the daughter of the Marchioness de Villeroi, arose from a suspicion that she was so; for, knowing that her rival, when she married the Marquis, was attached to another lover, she had scarcely scrupled to believe, that her honour had been sacrificed, like her own, to an unresisted passion.

Of a crime, however, to which Emily had suspected, from her phrensièd confession of murder, that she had been instrumental in the castle of Udolpho, Laurentini was innocent ; and she had herself been deceived concerning the spectacle, that formerly occasioned her so much terror, and had
since

since compelled her, for a while, to attribute the horrors of the nun to a consciousness of a murder, committed in that castle.

It may be remembered, that, in a chamber of Udolpho, hung a black veil, whose singular situation had excited Emily's curiosity, and which afterwards disclosed an object that had overwhelmed her with horror; for, on lifting it, there appeared, instead of the picture she had expected, within a recess of the wall, a human figure of ghastly paleness, stretched at its length, and dressed in the habiliments of the grave. What added to the horror of the spectacle, was, that the face appeared partly decayed and disfigured by worms, which were visible on the features and hands. On such an object, it will be readily believed, that no person could endure to look twice. Emily, it may be recollected, had, after the first glance, let the veil drop, and her terror had prevented her from ever after provoking a renewal of such suffering, as she had then experienced.—

Had

Had she dared to look again, her delusion and her fears would have vanished together, and she would have perceived, that the figure before her was not human, but formed of wax. The history of it is somewhat extraordinary, though not without example in the records of that fierce severity, which monkish superstition has sometimes inflicted on mankind. A member of the house of Udolpho, having committed some offence against the prerogative of the church, had been condemned to the penance of contemplating, during certain hours of the day, a waxen image, made to resemble a human body in the state to which it is reduced after death. This penance, serving as a memento of the condition at which he must himself arrive, had been designed to reprove the pride of the Marquis of Udolpho, which had formerly so much exasperated that of the Romish church ; and he had not only superstitiously observed this penance himself, which, he had believed, was to obtain a

pardon.

pardon for all his sins, but had made it a condition in his will, that his descendants should preserve the image, on pain of forfeiting to the church a certain part of his domain, that they also might profit by the humiliating moral it conveyed. The figure, therefore, had been suffered to retain its station in the wall of the chamber, but his descendants excused themselves from observing the penance, to which he had been enjoined.

This image was so horribly natural, that it is not surprising Emily should have mistaken it for the object it resembled, nor, since she had heard such an extraordinary account, concerning the disappearing of the late lady of the castle, and had such experience of the character of Montoni, that she should have believed this to be the murdered body of the lady Laurentini, and that he had been the contriver of her death.

The situation, in which she had discovered it, occasioned her, at first, much surprise and perplexity; but the vigilance, with
which

which the doors of the chamber, where it was deposited, were afterwards secured, had compelled her to believe, that Montoni, not daring to confide the secret of her death to any person, had suffered her remains to decay in this obscure chamber. The ceremony of the veil, however, and the circumstance of the doors having been left open, even for a moment, had occasioned her much wonder and some doubts; but these were not sufficient to overcome her suspicion of Montoni; and it was the dread of his terrible vengeance, that had sealed her lips in silence, concerning what she had seen in the west chamber.

Emily, in discovering the Marchioness de Villeroi to have been the sister of Mons. St. Aubert, was variously affected; but, amidst the sorrow, which she suffered for her untimely death, she was released from an anxious and painful conjecture, occasioned by the rash assertion of Signora Laurentini, concerning her birth and the honour of her parents. Her faith in St. Aubert's prin-

principles would scarcely allow her to suspect that he had acted dishonourably ; and she felt such reluctance to believe herself the daughter of any other, than her, whom she had always considered and loved as a mother, that she would hardly admit such a circumstance to be possible ; yet the likeness, which it had frequently been affirmed she bore to the late Marchioness, the former behaviour of Dorothée the old housekeeper, the assertion of Laurentini, and the mysterious attachment which St. Aubert had discovered, awakened doubts as to his connection with the Marchioness, which her reason could neither vanquish, or confirm. From these, however, she was now relieved, and all the circumstances of her father's conduct were fully explained ; but her heart was oppressed by the melancholy catastrophe of her amiable relative, and by the awful lesson, which the history of the nun exhibited, the indulgence of whose passions had been the means of leading her gradually to the commission of a crime, from the prophecy

phency of which in her early years she would have recoiled in horror, and exclaimed—that it could not be !—a crime, which whole years of repentance and of the severest penance had not been able to obliterate from her conscience.

CHAP. XVIII.

..... “ Then, fresh tears
Stood on her cheek, as doth the honey-dew
Upon a gather'd lily almost wither'd.”

SHAKESPEARE.

AFTER the late discoveries, Emily was distinguished at the chateau by the Count and his family, as a relative of the house of Villeroi, and received, if possible, more friendly attention, than had yet been shewn her.

Count de Villefort's surprise at the delay of an answer to his letter, which had been directed to Valancourt at Estuviere, was mingled with satisfaction for the prudence, which had saved Emily from a share of the anxiety he now suffered, though, when he saw her still drooping under the effect of his former

former error, all his resolution was necessary to restrain him from relating the truth, that would afford her a momentary relief. The approaching nuptials of the Lady Blanche now divided his attention with this subject of his anxiety, for the inhabitants of the chateau were already busied in preparations for that event, and the arrival of Monf. St. Foix was daily expected. In the gaiety, which surrounded her, Emily vainly tried to participate, her spirits being depressed by the late discoveries, and by the anxiety concerning the fate of Valancourt, that had been occasioned by the description of his manner, when he had delivered the ring. She seemed to perceive in it the gloomy wildness of despair; and, when she considered to what that despair might have urged him, her heart sunk with terror and grief. The state of suspense, as to his safety, to which she believed herself condemned, till she should return to La Vallée, appeared insupportable, and, in such moments, she

could not even struggle to assume the composure, that had left her mind, but would often abruptly quit the company she was with, and endeavour to sooth her spirits in the deep solitudes of the woods, that overbrowed the shore. Here, the faint roar of foaming waves, that beat below, and the sullen murmur of the wind among the branches around, were circumstances in unison with the temper of her mind ; and she would sit on a cliff, or on the broken steps of her favourite watch-tower, observing the changing colours of the evening clouds, and the gloom of twilight draw over the sea, till the white tops of billows, riding towards the shore, could scarcely be discerned amidst the darkened waters. The lines, engraved by Valancourt on this tower, she frequently repeated with melancholy enthusiasm, and then would endeavour to check the recollections and the grief they occasioned, and to turn her thoughts to indifferent subjects.

One evening, having wandered with her
lute

lute to this her favourite spot, she entered the ruined tower, and ascended a winding stair-case, that led to a small chamber, which was less decayed than the rest of the building, and whence she had often gazed, with admiration, on the wide prospect of sea and land, that extended below. The sun was now setting on that tract of the Pyrenées, which divides Languedoc from Roussillon, and, placing herself opposite to a small grated window, which, like the wood tops beneath, and the waves lower still, gleamed with the red glow of the west, she touched the chords of her lute in solemn symphony, and then accompanied it with her voice, in one of the simple and affecting airs, to which, in happier days, Valancourt had often listened in rapture, and which she now adapted to the following lines.

TO MELANCHOLY.

Spirit of love and sorrow—hail !
 Thy solemn voice from far I hear,
 Mingling with ev'ning's dying gale :
 Hail, with this sadly-pleasing tear !

O ! at this still, this lonely hour,
 Thine own sweet hour of closing day,
 Awake thy lute, whose charming pow'r
 Shall call up Fancy to obey,

To paint the wild romantic dream,
 That meets the poet's musing eye,
 As on the bank of shadowy stream,
 He breathes to her the fervid sigh.

O lonely spirit ! let thy song
 Lead me through all thy sacred haunt ;
 The minster's moon-light aisles along,
 Where spectres raise the midnight chaunt.

I hear their dirges faintly swell !
 Then, sink at once in silence drear,
 While, from the pillar'd cloister's cell,
 Dimly their gliding forms appear !

Lead where the pine-woods wave on high,
 Whose pathless sod is darkly seen,
 As the cold moon, with trembling eye,
 Darts her long beams the leaves between.

Lead to the mountain's dusky head,
 Where, far below, in shade profound,
 Wide forests, plains and hamlets spread,
 And sad the chimes of vesper sound.

Or guide me where the dashing oar
 Just breaks the stillness of the vale,
 As slow it tracks the winding shore,
 To meet the ocean's distant sail :

To pebbly banks, that Neptune laves,
 With measur'd surges, loud and deep,
 Where the dark cliff bends o'er the waves,
 And wild the winds of autumn sweep :

There pause at midnight's spectred hour,
 And lift the long-resounding gale :
 And catch the fleeting moon-light's pow'r,
 O'er foaming seas and distant sail.

The soft tranquillity of the scene below,
 where the evening breeze scarcely curled
 the water, or swelled the passing sail, that
 caught

caught the last gleam of the sun, and where, now and then, a dipping oar was all that disturbed the trembling radiance, conspired with the tender melody of her lute to lull her mind into a state of gentle sadness, and she sung the mournful songs of past times, till the remembrances they awakened were too powerful for her heart, her tears fell upon the lute, over which she drooped, and her voice trembled, and was unable to proceed.

Though the sun had now sunk behind the mountains, and even his reflected light was fading from their highest points, Emily did not leave the watch-tower, but continued to indulge her melancholy reverie, till a footstep, at a little distance, startled her, and, on looking through the grate, she observed a person walking below, whom, however, soon perceiving to be Monf. Bonnac, she returned to the quiet thoughtfulness his step had interrupted. After some time, she again struck her lute, and sung her favourite air; but again a step disturbed her,

and, as she paused to listen, she heard it ascending the stair-case of the tower. The gloom of the hour, perhaps, made her sensible to some degree of fear, which she might not otherwise have felt; for, only a few minutes before, she had seen *Monf. Bonnac* pass. The steps were quick and bounding, and, in the next moment, the door of the chamber opened, and a person entered, whose features were veiled in the obscurity of twilight; but his voice could not be concealed, for it was the voice of *Valancourt*! At the sound, never heard by *Emily* without emotion, she started, in terror, astonishment and doubtful pleasure, and had scarcely beheld him at her feet, when she sunk into a seat, overcome by the various emotions, that contended at her heart, and almost insensible to that voice, whose earnest and trembling calls seemed as if endeavouring to save her. *Valancourt*, as he hung over *Emily*, deplored his own rash impatience, in having thus surprised her: for when he had arrived at the chateau,

too anxious to await the return of the Count, who, he understood, was in the grounds, he went himself to seek him, when, as he passed the tower, he was struck by the sound of Emily's voice, and immediately ascended.

It was a considerable time before she revived, but, when her recollection returned, she repulsed his attentions, with an air of reserve, and enquired, with as much displeasure as it was possible she could feel in these first moments of his appearance, the occasion of his visit.

"Ah Emily!" said Valancourt, "that air, those words—alas! I have, then, little to hope—when you ceased to esteem me, you ceased also to love me!"

"Most true, sir," replied Emily, endeavouring to command her trembling voice; "and if you had valued my esteem, you would not have given me this new occasion for uneasiness."

Valancourt's countenance changed suddenly from the anxieties of doubt to an ex-

pression of surprise and dismay: he was silent a moment, and then said, "I had been taught to hope for a very different reception! Is it, then, true, Emily, that I have lost your regard, forever? am I to believe, that though your esteem for me may return—your affection never can? Can the Count have meditated the cruelty, which now tortures me with a second death?"

The voice, in which he spoke this, alarmed Emily as much as his words surprised her, and, with trembling impatience, she begged that he would explain them.

"Can any explanation be necessary?" said Valancourt, "do you not know how cruelly my conduct has been misrepresented? that the actions of which you once believed me guilty (and, O Emily! how could you so degrade me in your opinion, even for a moment!) those actions—I hold in as much contempt and abhorrence as yourself? Are you, indeed, ignorant, that Count de Villefort has detected the slanders, that have robbed

robbed me of all I hold dear on earth, and has invited me hither to justify to you my former conduct? It is surely impossible you can be uninformed of these circumstances, and I am again torturing myself with a false hope!"

The silence of Emily confirmed this supposition; for the deep twilight would not allow Valancourt to distinguish the astonishment and doubting joy, that fixed her features. For a moment, she continued unable to speak; then a profound sigh seemed to give some relief to her spirits, and she said,

"Valancourt! I was, till this moment, ignorant of all the circumstances you have mentioned; the emotion I now suffer may assure you of the truth of this, and, that, though I had ceased to esteem, I had not taught myself entirely to forget you."

"This moment," said Valancourt, in a low voice, and leaning for support against the window—"this moment brings with it a conviction that overpowers me!—I am

dear to you then—still dear to you, my Emily!”

“Is it necessary that I should tell you so?” she replied, “is it necessary, that I should say—these are the first moments of joy I have known, since your departure, and that they repay me for all those of pain I have suffered in the interval?”

Valancourt sighed deeply, and was unable to reply; but, as he pressed her hand to his lips, the tears, that fell over it, spoke a language, which could not be mistaken, and to which words were inadequate.

Emily, somewhat tranquillized, proposed returning to the chateau, and then, for the first time, recollected that the Count had invited Valancourt thither to explain his conduct, and that no explanation had yet been given. But, while she acknowledged this, her heart would not allow her to dwell, for a moment, on the possibility of his unworthiness; his look, his voice, his manner, all spoke the noble sincerity, which
had

had formerly distinguished him; and she again permitted herself to indulge the emotions of a joy, more surprising and powerful, than she had ever before experienced.

Neither Emily, or Valancourt, were conscious how they reached the chateau, whither they might have been transferred by the spell of a fairy, for any thing they could remember; and it was not, till they had reached the great hall, that either of them recollected there were other persons in the world besides themselves. The Count then came forth with surprise, and with the joyfulness of pure benevolence, to welcome Valancourt, and to entreat his forgiveness of the injustice he had done him; soon after which, Mons. Bonnac joined this happy group, in which he and Valancourt were mutually rejoiced to meet.

When the first congratulations were over, and the general joy became somewhat more tranquil, the Count withdrew with Valancourt to the library, where a long conversation passed between them, in which the
latter

latter so clearly justified himself of the criminal parts of the conduct, imputed to him, and so candidly confessed and so feelingly lamented the follies, which he had committed, that the Count was confirmed in the belief of all he had hoped; and, while he perceived so many noble virtues in Valancourt, and that experience had taught him to detest the follies, which before he had only not admired, he did not scruple to believe, that he would pass through life with the dignity of a wise and good man, or to entrust to his care the future happiness of Emily St. Aubert, for whom he felt the solicitude of a parent. Of this he soon informed her, in a short conversation, when Valancourt had left him. While Emily listened to a relation of the services, that Valancourt had rendered Mons. Bonnac, her eyes overflowed with tears of pleasure, and the further conversation of Count de Villefort perfectly dissipated every doubt, as to the past and future conduct of him, to whom she now restored,

stored, without fear, the esteem and affection, with which she had formerly received him.

When they returned to the supper-room, the Countess and Lady Blanche met Valancourt with sincere congratulations; and Blanche, indeed, was so much rejoiced to see Emily returned to happiness, as to forget, for a while, that Monf. St. Foix was not yet arrived at the chateau, though he had been expected for some hours; but her generous sympathy was, soon after, rewarded by his appearance. He was now perfectly recovered from the wounds, received, during his perilous adventure among the Pyrenées, the mention of which served to heighten to the parties, who had been involved in it, the sense of their present happiness. New congratulations passed between them, and round the supper-table appeared a group of faces, smiling with felicity, but with a felicity, which had in each a different character. The smile of
Blanche

Blanche was frank and gay, that of Emily tender and pensive; Valancourt's was rapturous, tender and gay alternately; Monf. St. Foix's was joyous, and that of the Count, as he looked on the surrounding party, expressed the tempered complacency of benevolence; while the features of the Countess, Henri, and Monf. Bonnac, discovered fainter traces of animation. Poor Monf. Du Pont did not, by his presence, throw a shade of regret over the company; for, when he had discovered, that Valancourt was not unworthy of the esteem of Emily, he determined seriously to endeavour at the conquest of his own hopeless affection, and had immediately withdrawn from Chateau-le-Blanc—a conduct, which Emily now understood, and rewarded with her admiration and pity.

The Count and his guests continued together till a late hour, yielding to the delights of social gaiety, and to the sweets of friendship. When Annette heard of the
arrival

arrival of Valancourt, Ludovico had some difficulty to prevent her going into the supper-room, to express her joy, for she declared, that she had never been so rejoiced at any *accident* as this, since she had found Ludovico himself.

CHAP. XIX.

“ Now my task is smoothly done,
 I can fly, or I can run
 Quickly to the green earth's end,
 Where the bow'd welkin low doth bend,
 And, from thence, can soar as soon
 To the corners of the moon.”

MILTON.

THE marriages of the Lady Blanche and Emily St. Aubert were celebrated, on the same day, and with the ancient baronial magnificence, at Chateau-le-Blanc. The feasts were held in the great hall of the castle, which, on this occasion, was hung with superb new tapestry, representing the exploits of Charlemagne and his twelve peers; here were seen the Saracens, with their horrible visors, advancing to battle; and there, were displayed the wild solemnities

solemnities of incantation, and the necromantic feats, exhibited by the magician *Jarl* before the Emperor. The sumptuous banners of the family of Villeroi, which had long slept in dust, were once more unfurled, to wave over the gothic points of painted casements; and music echoed, in many a lingering close, through every winding gallery and colonnade of that vast edifice.

As Annette looked down from the corridor upon the hall, whose arches and windows were illuminated with brilliant festoons of lamps, and gazed on the splendid dresses of the dancers, the costly liveries of the attendants, the canopies of purple velvet and gold, and listened to the gay strains that floated along the vaulted roof, she almost fancied herself in an enchanted palace, and declared, that she had not met with any place, which charmed her so much, since she read the fairy tales; nay, that the fairies themselves, at their
nightly

nightly révels in this old hall, could display nothing finer; while old Dorothée, as she surveyed the scene, sighed, and said, the castle looked as it was wont to do in the time of her youth.

After gracing the festivities of Chateaulle-Blanc, for some days, Valancourt and Emily took leave of their kind friends, and returned to La Vallée, where the faithful Theresa received them with unfeigned joy, and the pleasant shades welcomed them with a thousand tender and affecting remembrances; and, while they wandered together over the scenes, so long inhabited by the late Mons. and Madame St. Aubert, and Emily pointed out, with pensive affection, their favourite haunts, her present happiness was heightened, by considering, that it would have been worthy of their approbation, could they have witnessed it.

Valancourt led her to the plane-tree on the terrace, where he had first ventured

to

to declare his love, and where now the remembrance of the anxiety he had then suffered, and the retrospect of all the dangers and misfortunes they had each encountered, since last they sat together beneath its broad branches, exalted the sense of their present felicity, which, on this spot, sacred to the memory of St. Aubert, they solemnly vowed to deserve, as far as possible, by endeavouring to imitate his benevolence,—by remembering, that superior attainments of every sort bring with them duties of superior exertion,—and, by affording to their fellow-beings, together with that portion of ordinary comforts, which prosperity always owes to misfortune, the example of lives passed in happy thankfulness to God, and, therefore, in careful tenderness to his creatures.

Soon after their return to La Vallée, the brother of Valancourt came to congratulate him on his marriage, and to pay his respects to Emily, with whom he was so much pleased, as well as with the prospect

of rational happiness, which these nuptials offered to Valancourt, that he immediately resigned to him a part of the rich domain, the whole of which, as he had no family, would of course descend to his brother, on his decease.

The estates, at Tholouse, were disposed of, and Emily purchased of Mons. Questel the antient domain of her late father, where, having given Annette a marriage-portion, she settled her as the housekeeper, and Ludovico as the steward; but, since both Valancourt and herself preferred the pleasant and long-loved shades of La Vallée to the magnificence of Epourville, they continued to reside there, passing, however, a few months in the year at the birth-place of St. Aubert, in tender respect to his memory.

The legacy, which had been bequeathed to Emily by Signora Laurentini, she begged Valancourt would allow her to resign to Mons. Bonnac; and Valancourt, when she

she made the request, felt all the value of the compliment it conveyed. The castle of Udolpho, also, descended to the wife of Mons. Bonnac, who was the nearest surviving relation of the house of that name, and thus affluence restored his long oppressed spirits to peace, and his family to comfort.

O! how joyful it is to tell of happiness, such as that of Valancourt and Emily; to relate, that, after suffering under the oppression of the vicious, and the disdain of the weak, they were, at length, restored to each other—to the beloved landscapes of their native country—to the securest felicity of this life, that of aspiring to moral and labouring for intellectual improvement—to the pleasures of enlightened society, and to the exercise of the benevolence which had always animated their hearts; while the bowers of La Vallée became, once more, the retreat of goodness, wisdom and domestic blessedness!

O! useful

O! useful may it be to have shewn, that, though the vicious can sometimes pour affliction upon the good, their power is transient and their punishment certain; and that innocence, though oppressed by injustice, shall, supported by patience, finally triumph over misfortune!

And, if the weak hand that has recorded this tale, has, by its scenes, beguiled the mourner of one hour of sorrow, or, by its moral, taught him to sustain it—the effort, however humble, has not been vain, nor is the writer unrewarded.

F I N I S .





